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ZING MOMBÓ



DU CHAILLU



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on War, Revolution, and Peace

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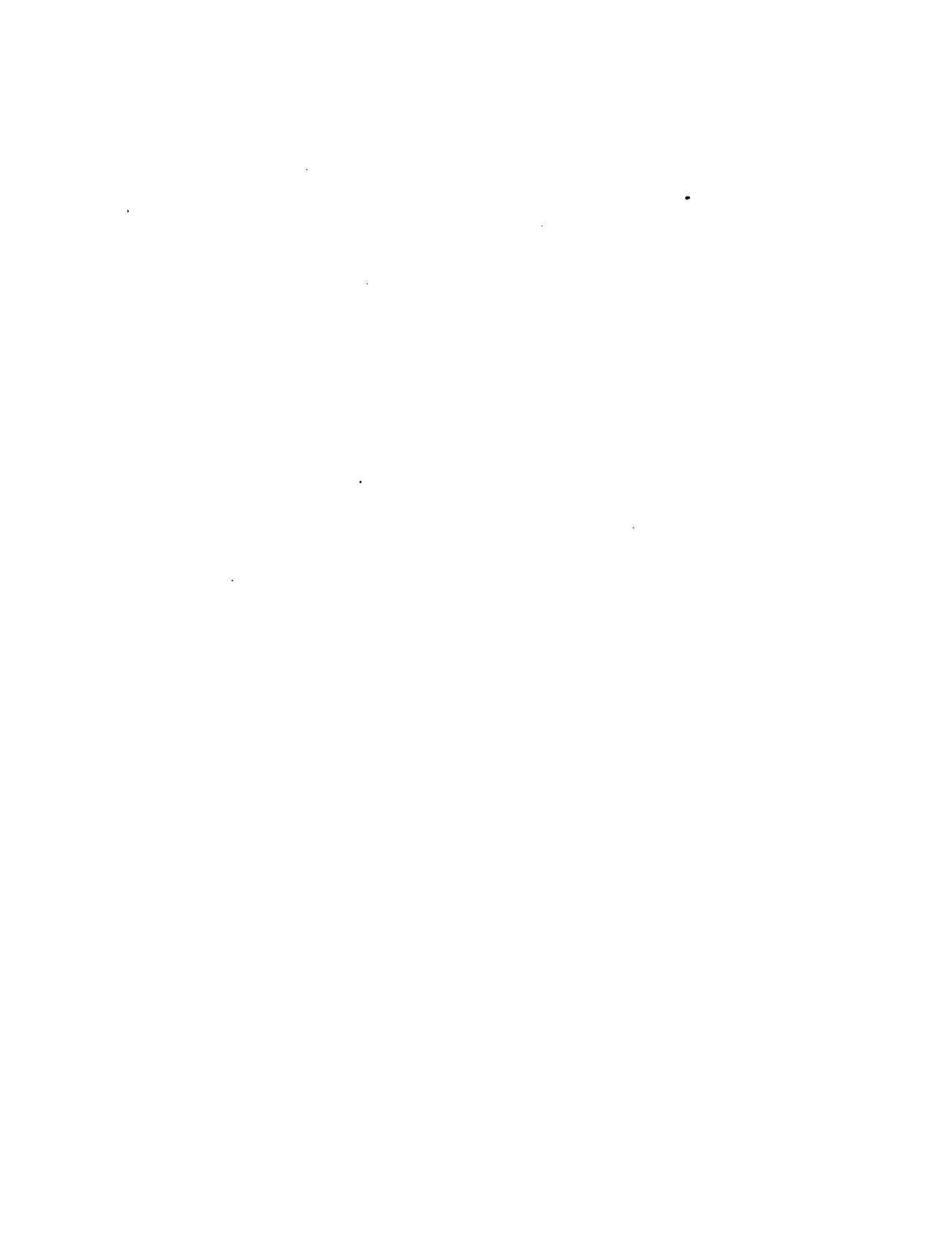






King Mombo







*"These . . . inquired if we wanted to barter for
ivory with them"*

Mombo

Chella

Chella is a young girl who lives in the
Mambo community. She is a very
kind and helpful person. She is
also a very good student. She is
very smart and hardworking.

Chella is a very good student.





King Mombo

By

Paul Du Chaillu

Author of "The World of the Great Forest," "The Viking Age," "The Land of the Long Night," "Ivar the Viking," "The Land of the Midnight Sun," "Explorations in Equatorial Africa," "Stories of the Gorilla Country," "Wild Life under the Equator," "Lost in the Jungle," "My Apingi Kingdom," "The Country of the Dwarfs," etc., etc.

Illustrated by Victor Perard

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TO
SOLOMON SOLIS COHEN, M.D.
Philadelphia

MR DEAR SOLIS,— Looking back through the vista of years, and remembering your solicitude when I came to you broken in health, and the care, professional and other, through which your affection and skill restored me to health and permitted the resumption of my literary labors, my heart overflows. I take great pleasure in dedicating this volume to you as a partial evidence of the gratitude and brotherly affection of

Ever your firm friend,

PAUL DU CHAILLU.

New York, June 19, 1901.





Letter of Friend Paul to the Young Folks

MY DEAR YOUNG FOLKS,—In writing the books I have written for you in years past I left untold many of the adventures that happened to me in the great African forest, either with the wild men and savage tribes I encountered or in hunting the wild beasts. I could write many more volumes upon these subjects, and still there would be much left unsaid.

“Stories of the Gorilla Country,” “Lost in the Jungle,” “Wild Life under the Equator,” “My Apingi Kingdom,” “The Country of the Dwarfs,” did not tell all I saw or all that happened to me during the many years of my African life.

I am to travel in Russia, and I have put into the hands of my friends and publishers, Messrs. Charles Scribner’s Sons, the manuscripts of two further books I have written for you, telling more of my adventures in the Great Forest. These two volumes, of which “King Mombo” is the first, will be published during my absence, and will be companions to “The Land of the Long Night” and “The World of the Great Forest.”

In the meantime I say good-by. Do not forget

FRIEND PAUL.



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KING MOMBO

CHAPTER I

I LEAVE NEW YORK FOR AFRICA — NARROW QUARTERS
ON THE SCHOONER — OUR CARGO — OUT OF SIGHT
OF LAND — THE SEA AND ALL THAT THEREIN IS —
A STORM BREWING.

ONE summer morning I found myself on board a small schooner lying at anchor in the beautiful bay of New York. This little vessel, though so small, was large enough to sail safely across the Atlantic to the west coast of Africa, to which part of the world we were bound.

On account of the small size of the schooner, the accommodations on board were not very comfortable. The tiny cabin had three narrow bunks — one for the captain, another for the mate, the third for myself. A little cupboard, containing the plates, glasses, forks, spoons, knives, etc., secured against the rolling of the ship, was near one of the bunks.

A small table upon which our meals were served stood in the centre, and was the only piece of furniture we had, for box-like benches along the bunks

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were our seats, and these were also used as places of storage for different things that had to be handy. Besides these there was a medicine chest.

The only place where one could stand upright was under the skylight. Our toilet or the washing of our faces and hands took place on deck, and when it was raining or stormy the tin wash-basin had to be used in the cabin, though we tried to avoid this as much as possible, it made such a mess.

The forecabin had accommodation for the crew of four sailors and the cook — the latter being also the steward, and having therefore to set the table, serve the meals, wash the dishes, towels, and napkins, and attend to our bunks.

On the deck stood the galley or kitchen, close by, a large cask containing fresh water, with a dipper. Some other casks were safely stored in the hold. These contained water, to us more precious than gold, for what would gold have availed us if we had had no water to drink?

Our cargo was composed of many things, such as brass kettles, guns, small kegs of powder, brass rods, looking-glasses, files, knives, plates, and a great number of beads of all sizes and colors, bright colored cotton umbrellas, coats of gaudy hues, each coat having sleeves and backs of different tints, brilliant colored



In the cabin of the schooner





KING MOMBO

waistcoats and many other objects. All these were to buy for me the right of way with the African kings, or to give away to the natives, or pay for food or pay my porters.

When the tide served for our departure the captain gave the order to unfurl the sails and raise the anchor. Our ship then glided out into the bay, passed through the Narrows and breasted the broad Atlantic. When we began to lose sight of land, strange sensations crept over me. Before me was the bright future, the great African forest with its tribes of wild men, strange beasts, birds, and insects. Looming above these was the wonderful unknown, so fascinating to me and to all men, especially to lads. Behind me were those I had left, who were dear to me, and to them I whispered a silent farewell, telling them that I would continue to love them and that I would never forget them. That evening with conflicting emotions, and a sad heart I fell asleep.

The following morning when I came on deck there was no land to be seen. The sea with its apparently boundless horizon surrounded our little ship. Long heaving swells rose one after another, and with great wonder my eyes followed them until they faded away in the distance. It seemed as if some great unseen giant were asleep at the bottom of the sea, and that

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his breathing caused this up-heaving of the ocean into these long swells.

Gulls were our only companions, and followed our little ship; they seemed to fly without any effort whatever, their spread wings remaining perfectly still for minutes at a time. As I watched them, I said musingly: "Dear harmless gulls, where is your home?" And it seemed to me that they answered: "We have no home; we wander far and wide over the ocean, which gives us our food. We rest on the waves now and then, we care not for wind and storms. We often follow ships, — watching for things thrown overboard. But every year we go to the sea cliffs to lay our eggs, and take care of our young. Then we are a great throng together."

I thought of the many birds of the sea, and of the giant albatross, closely allied to the gulls — the largest and strongest of all sea-birds, measuring sometimes sixteen and seventeen feet between the tips of their extended wings.

My mind was full of reflections as I was looking at the sea, and I said to myself: "How apparently boundless is this great Atlantic Ocean, and how wonderful! In the far north a gigantic barrier of ice prevents the mariner with his ship from reaching the North Pole." And I thought of all the heroes who had made the

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attempt in vain. In the far south a still more forbidding and more extended wall of ice prevents the mariner also from reaching the South Pole. I thought of the white bears, the sea-lions, the walrus. I thought of the Esquimaux, of his dogs, of his kayak or skin canoe, and wondered how men could choose such regions to live in; for life, there, is a battle all the time; dangers meet man on every side. The elements and the country are against him; but in spite of all that, the Esquimaux loves the dreary ice and barren rocks where he was born.

How strange, I thought, that no inhabitant had been found in the southern polar regions, and that no bears had ever been discovered there; and how wonderful it was that at the poles, the sun was in sight for six months, and remained unseen during the six other months of the year, so that a day of light and a day of darkness made one year. When the sun shone at the North Pole, it was dark at the South Pole, and *vice versa*.

I could not help it, but the view of the great ocean that surrounded us set me continually thinking that day. I wondered at the great depth of the sea, and that the Pacific Ocean was even deeper than the Atlantic—the former in some places having been found to be thirty thousand feet deep, and in a number of places

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the lead having failed to reach the bottom. The pressure of the water is so great that often the wire holding the lead breaks before reaching such great depths ; but if our eyes could pierce through this immense mass of water, we should see that the configuration of land at the bottom of the oceans is very much like that of the earth above the sea. We should behold high mountains, deep ravines, and precipices, and large plains or plateaux, and see that in some places the bottom of the sea is changing constantly, owing to drifting deposits. These have been revealed to us by soundings.

Strange to say, under that great mass of water, as upon the land, sudden volcanic eruptions take place which cause islands to rise high above the sea and to disappear again. Many islands to this day have remained as witnesses of these volcanic eruptions, and become, in the course of ages, covered with forests and other vegetation, and are now inhabited by man.

There is about three times as much sea as there is land ; and if it were not for the sea bringing moisture, neither tree, beast, nor man could live on the earth. Though the oceans bear different names, they all communicate with each other.

Then I thought of the rain, and all the rivers pouring their waters into the sea, and I wondered why

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the sea did not get higher, and, in the course of time, overflow the land. It is because of the evaporation of the water. Do we not see, every morning, the dew-drops glitter in the sun and then disappear? They have evaporated, and gone back to help form the clouds, as well as the sea.

Then I thought of the whales, and of their huge size; that on land the elephant was the largest animal, and that in the sea the whale was the largest creature; and that, though the whale was so much larger than in the comparison the elephant was but a pigmy, yet the home of the whale is correspondingly greater than that of the elephant.

There are several varieties of whales. The Arctic and Greenland whale is from forty to fifty feet in length. Its enormous head is a third of the whole creature. There is also a species of whale which attains a length of eighty, and even eighty-five, feet.

How strange that several species of these huge creatures, on account of the peculiar formation of their throats, can only feed on the most minute crustaceans and pteropods. The fecundity of some of the species of the latter is so wonderful that they cover large areas of the northern and southern Atlantic and Pacific, and swarm in vast shoals, covering the sea for miles, showing their presence by a ruddy hue contrasting

KING MOMBO

with the color of the water. What a feast the whales have when they come where these small creatures are ! Their big mouths allow them to take in barrels of water filled with these minute organisms, and they are provided with a peculiar and delicate sieve, by which the water is drained off and the mass of pteropods taken into their stomachs.

I said to myself: "I am now sailing over the home of the whales, and I am going to the home of the elephants."

But the poor whales and elephants are so much hunted that they become fewer in number every year ; and I remembered how my grandmother used to worry at the thought of the disappearance of the whale, for no oil for lamps could then be procured, and what would people then do for light ?

After thinking of the whales, I thought of the countless millions and varieties of fish that swim in the sea. I thought of the codfish, of the herring, and of the mackerel, and of their innumerable numbers, and of the many millions that are caught every year by man. Their vast shoals seem not to diminish in spite of all.

How intelligent are the codfish, and other fishes, in their migration. The cod come by countless millions to the same place to spawn. They make their appearance at the same time, year after year, often coming

KING MOMBO

the very same day as the year before, and rarely more than a week before or after their usual time of arrival. After spawning they disappear, leaving stragglers remaining behind. No one knows where they go.

Then I thought of the relentless warfare among fishes, the big fish feeding on the smaller ones, — one single big fish eating hundreds of little ones in one day, the very big ones thousands. The number eaten every day is so great that no calculation can be made of those destroyed. But if it were not for this great destruction among themselves, the sea would become so thick with them, the water would become poisoned and they would all die, and the stench would spread the plague over the world and destroy man.

The second day we saw a sail in the offing, which relieved the loneliness of the sea. Human beings were on board. Man loves the sight of man. The ship passed close to ours and then the wake it left behind disappeared forever.

Towards evening the breeze freshened, the sky became dark, and clouds hung low and sped rapidly. During the night the whistling of the wind and the tossing of the ship told me that a storm was raging. We had entered in the meantime the wonderful Gulf Stream, with its warm water flowing northward. The gale was from the southwest.

CHAPTER II

A STORM AT SEA — A TEMPEST-TOSSED LITTLE BIRD —
FINE WEATHER AGAIN — FIGHT BETWEEN A SWORD-
FISH AND A WHALE.

WHEN I came on deck in the morning there was a great storm raging. The sky above our heads was dark and threatening. The clouds were low and moved with great swiftiness. The wind blew with the fury of a hurricane and hissed through the rigging. The sails were furled except two, which, however, had three reefs in them. The sea looked fiercely angry and the big waves broke one after another in foaming white crests. The ocean was one mass of foam and spray. The rain was pouring in torrents. Our little ship was tossed as if she had been a walnut-shell. Wave after wave broke upon her side or buried her prow, pouring tons of water on our deck and enveloping us at the same time in spray. At times the men were lashed to keep them from being washed overboard. The gulls were flying over our heads, and the stormy petrel had made its appearance. For a few hours it looked as if our ship could not with-

KING MOMBO

stand the storm and would founder under a big wave. I thought at that time that I should never see home again.

For three days we were buffeted over the great sea. Then the storm ceased. The sails were unreefed and the carpenters and the sailors made the necessary repairs upon our battered little ship.

Suddenly I thought I heard the cry of distress of a bird, and looking upward I saw a little bulfinch flying near the ship. The bird wanted to perch on the rigging but did not dare. He came near, and then moved away, uttering little cries of anguish. Evidently the sails scared him—for he had never seen a ship before and he knew that it was not a tree. The tempestuous wind, blowing from the land, had driven this little wanderer far out to sea; he had lost his reckoning and did not know where the land was. For several days and nights he had been flying, finding no trees to rest upon, no water to drink, no berries, fruits or seeds to eat. He was exhausted, for he had had no rest and no food. Fear was in his little heart. I got water and bread ready for him in case he came on board and we could catch him.

During the day he followed us, uttering his little cries of distress, but did not dare to alight upon the ship, though he knew that the sea was his enemy

KING MOMBO

and that if he fell into the water he would meet his death. Perhaps he thought of the land he had left behind — of his dear mates, of trees, of water and of food, of lovely dales and little brooks.

I noticed, as the day advanced, that the little bulfinch did not fly so high above the sea as in the morning; lower and lower became his flight. The motion of his wings in his despair became quicker and quicker as his strength diminished. At times he almost touched the water, then, uttering a shrill cry, he would rise, only to come down again. I shouted: "Come and rest upon our little ship, dear little bulfinch. Come on deck; I will take good care of you. Here are food and water waiting for you. Nobody on board is so wicked as to kill you, or harm you."

But the little bird kept on, and at last his body touched the sea, and as he rose he uttered a most piercing cry of distress, then, taking an upward flight, he hovered over the ship. His strength was gone, his wings refused to move, and he fell upon the deck. I rushed quickly towards him — he was panting. I took him in my hands — how quickly his heart was beating! I gave him some water; he drank it, then dropped dead. His struggles for dear life were over. Then I put the little bulfinch in a small wooden box; it was his coffin, and I closed the top and buried him

KING MOMBO

at sea just as the sun was disappearing below the horizon.

The following day the weather was very beautiful, — a lovely blue sky was over our heads. What a change between this and the great storm we had passed through! The sea was a mass of beautiful "white caps," each one with its own changing form. Strange as it seems, there are no two things exactly alike in the world — not even two white caps, two blades of grass, two leaves, neither two men nor two women.

We sailed merrily along day after day, carried on by variable winds, our course being one point south of east, and one afternoon gazing over the ocean, I saw a number of whales disporting and spouting water high in the air. Looking over the rail my attention was suddenly attracted to a large, dark, elongated fish, that was swimming fast, as if in quest of something. As it neared the ship and swam alongside I recognized it to be a powerful swordfish, which I thought was about twelve or fifteen feet in length. Its sword seemed about three feet long, and was a continuation of its upper jaw. The sword was flat and pointed at the end. The very shape of the fish showed that it could swim with great rapidity.

The swordfish is the most fearless of all fishes, I reflected; he is afraid of nothing and might take

KING MOMBO

our little ship for a whale, and attack us; for the whale and the swordfish are sworn enemies. There are many instances on record of ships being attacked by swordfish, and their thick oak hulls pierced through, the sword remaining in the wood, the fish not having strength enough to draw it out when deeply imbedded in the hull. There have also been instances in which small vessels have been sunk by them.

Soon I noticed another swordfish, and saw both of them leap out of the water, pursuing each other and then discovered that they were fighting. They were swimming with the rapidity of an express train at the rate, I thought, of thirty or forty miles an hour. They were so quick in their movements that they could not hit each other with their swords. Their dorsal fins as they cut through the surface of the water made a peculiar noise like a sharp boat with sails set cutting through the sea. They would disappear under the water and then reappear on the surface, then swim towards each other with such extraordinary velocity that my eyes could hardly follow them. They seemed to know that their vulnerable point was the side, and wheeled with astonishing quickness, so that they would always face each other.

A short time afterwards I saw ahead of us a great commotion in the water—the sea was white with



"The captain shouted to me: 'A swordfish is fighting a whale'."





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foam. The captain shouted to me: "A swordfish is fighting a whale." I went up the rigging to see the fight. The whale spouted big streams of water in the air, its tail was slapping the sea with terrific force, beating the water into white spray all around. At times everything was like a white mist round the huge creature, which seemed to be going in every direction, as if bewildered. It was fighting for dear life, and was trying to hit its antagonist with its powerful tail. If it only succeeded in striking the swordfish, then the greatest creature of the sea would be the victor.

Unfortunately, the whale is unwieldy and the swordfish is very quick in its movements. Every frantic motion the whale made was a sign that the swordfish had plunged its long, pointed sword into its body. The fight went on for a while, the swordfish getting evidently the better of the whale, for the blows of the latter's huge tail did not strike the water with as much force as before, and the sea did not look so disturbed. Then suddenly I saw a great spout of water rise above the sea, and all became quiet. The fight was over; the whale had been vanquished and had received its death-thrust from the swordfish, and it must have received many wounds, for as we sailed over the place where they had been fighting, the sea was red with blood.



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“In these conflicts between the swordfish and the whale, it is said that the whale is oftener the victor,” said the captain to me, “for if the whale succeeds in striking the swordfish with its tail, the latter is either killed or so much stunned that the combat is not renewed.”

CHAPTER III

THE SARGASSO SEA — THE NORTHEAST TRADE-WINDS —
DOLPHINS AND BONITAS — NEW STARS COME INTO
VIEW.

A FEW days after the fight between the sword-fish and the whale, as I came on deck early in the morning, a strange sight met my eyes. I could not see the water of the ocean, the vessel appeared as if it had been stranded and left by the tide on a land covered with seaweed. We had entered during the night that part of the Atlantic which was called by Columbus and other early Spanish navigators "Mar de Sargazo" — and which is known to us now under the name of the Sargasso Sea.

The Sargasso Sea lies in that quiet area of the Atlantic Ocean between 28° and 32° north latitude, and 35° and 55° west longitude, varying slightly in its position at times on account of long prevailing winds, or currents caused by those winds. This sea comprises an area of about one hundred and fifty miles from north to south, and about four hundred and fifty miles from east to west. This space is entirely covered with seaweed and in many places so thick that for hundreds of acres the water is hidden from view.

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The stem of the Sargasso weed attains often a length of several hundred feet and has many branches growing from the stem, which in the course of time break in many places. These vines are covered with berries, which have the appearance of bunches of grapes. On that account the seaweed is called by the sailors by the different names of grape weed, grape of the tropics, and the Sargasso weed. We sailed through this remarkable area of the ocean, carried onwards by light variable winds — sometimes making but little headway.

One day we met the Northeast trade-winds, which are generally encountered at about the fortieth degree of longitude west of Greenwich, and 30° north latitude. I thought how wonderful it was that these northeast trade-winds had been blowing constantly without intermission over a part of the Atlantic, as long as men remembered, for thousands of years and, in fact, from the time the great desert of Sahara appeared upon our earth. These northeast trade-winds blow across the Atlantic Ocean as far south as the tenth degree of north latitude and at certain times of the year as far as the fifth and sixth degrees, and lose their force as they reach the West Indies.

We sailed somewhat parallel to the coast which forms the western part of the great desert of Sahara, which begins south of Morocco, latitude 30° north and fol-

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lows the Atlantic near to the Senegal river 15° north — a distance on a straight line of nine hundred miles.

One morning as I came on deck, before it had been washed, I noticed some minute particles of sand that had fallen from the sky, and were still falling, though we were hundreds of miles at sea. It was sand from the great Sahara, which had been carried high into the atmosphere by the wind, and the captain said to me when he saw my astonishment: "Sometimes the sand from the Sahara is carried a thousand miles out to sea, and we are now about seven hundred miles from the coast."

The lively northeast trade-winds carried us southward day after day — and how beautiful was the sky! White fleecy clouds, looking like gigantic flashes of cotton, often diaphanous, floated rapidly by, borne on the wind in the blue heavens which were reflected in the sea. There was no rain to disturb us. No weather could have been more beautiful.

Almost every day we saw immense shoals of porpoises swimming at a great rate and jumping out of the water, many amusing themselves in swimming round our little ship. They seemed always to swim against the wind. At other times dolphins and bonitas followed us. The dolphin is the most beautiful of all fishes, and they added to our larder, for they were

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voracious and eagerly bit at the hooks. In its death throes the dolphin changed into hues of marvellous colors. Once in a great while we would see a turtle floating on the sea. Days passed away, our little vessel sailing under a most beautiful sky with a lovely breeze. I had noticed a change in the firmament. The heavens at night were not like those at home. Some of the stars that were south in the northern states were now north, and stars appeared daily which were unknown to me. The constellations had changed their shape also. The north star reached its meridian altitude lower every day, and came nearer and nearer the horizon. Other stars of our northern latitude followed in its wake.

At last, one night the north star was very near the horizon and showed itself for a short time only. The next night as I watched for it, it suddenly appeared, and for the last time, as it was on the point of disappearing under the horizon. It seemed as if I heard the dear north star say to me: "Good-by, Paul: you will not see me again until you come back home," and I answered: "Good-by, little north star, I hope to come home again and look at you when you twinkle in the sky," and at those words of mine, the star vanished from my sight. The next night I watched in vain for its appearance; it never came.



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As we sailed southward the constellation of the southern cross appeared, — four brilliant stars making the perfect shape of a cross, — Sirius resplendent in light and the most brilliant star in the heavens, called also the Dog Star. All the southern stars seemed to say “Welcome, Paul, to our southern latitudes.” But they were strangers to me. Though I admired their brilliancy I longed for our northern stars, — for we love the stars which shine upon the country where we were born.



CHAPTER IV

THE "DOLDRUMS" — FIERCE HEAT OF THE SUN —
STRONG LOCAL CURRENTS — THE SOUTHEAST TRADE-
WINDS — HUGE SHARKS ALL AROUND US.

OUR happy days in this enchanted region of the Atlantic Ocean were coming to an end. The northeast trade-winds became less strong as we neared the equator, and soon died away. Then came a great calm; we had entered that area of the Atlantic which is the dread of the mariner with sailing ships and known under the name of "Doldrums," a region of calms, baffling winds, and squalls accompanied by thunder and lightning.

I shall never forget the "Doldrums" as long as I live, and the days I spent crossing it. It lies between the northeast and southeast trade-winds, and we had to sail through it to reach the southeast trade-winds.

"Doldrums," in the language of the sailor, means dull and low-spirited, and well deserved is the name. It is also known by them as the horse latitudes, for when ships linger there for weeks, horses, cattle, live stock have to be thrown overboard for lack of water

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and food. When unlucky, vessels are detained several weeks within its belt. The area varies more or less according to the strength of the trade-winds.

No northeast trade-winds cooled the atmosphere. The reflection of the powerful rays of the sun from the warm ocean made the heat intense during the day. During the night our cabin was unbearable. Not a breath of wind came to our relief, not a ripple was seen on the deep-blue ocean, which looked like a sea of glass. For five days two empty flour barrels that had been thrown overboard remained alongside of our ship. Long, heavy swells followed each other and made the vessel roll in such a terrible manner that I thought at times that the ends of the main-yards would touch the sea. The calm was so great that the steering gear was of no use, the sails had to be furled to protect them from being torn to pieces, as they struck the mast at each roll of the ship with tremendous force. We lay often athwart these swells, the vessel rolling in such manner that we could not stand on the deck, and had to hold to the rigging or something fast in order not to be dashed to one side or another or against the bulwarks.

The unprotected parts of the ship that came under the rays of the sun became so hot that we could not rest our hands upon them. If we had had no tents

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protecting the decks and ourselves we should not have been able to live through the "Doldrums." It was out of the question to sleep below decks, for there the atmosphere was suffocating and the ventilators had become useless for want of air. We always longed for the night, and rejoiced each time the sun disappeared below the horizon. In the morning we dreaded its appearance. To go into the cabin for our meals, to hold on to the table while eating, was often impossible on account of the terrific rolling; our drinking water became tepid, for we had no ice to cool it. In a word, life was a burden.

After a few days of dead calms we encountered baffling winds and squalls day after day. A squall would rise, push us on our way towards the southeast trade-winds, another would come in another direction and send us back where we had come from. Between the squalls came a dead calm.

The captain often mistrusted the strength of the squalls, and when he saw the black clouds gather on the horizon, the forerunner of the squall, the sails were furled, for fear that the power of the wind might dismast or capsize the ship. Sometimes when he thought the squall would not be a heavy one and when it came from the right direction, he would have the men at the halliards ready to spread the sails, in

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case he was mistaken in his judgment, for he wanted to take every advantage and not lose one minute of fair wind that would help us to get away from the regions of the "Doldrums."

Once in a while we encountered strong local currents. How strange are these currents found in the middle of the ocean — an independent body of water moving at times with a velocity of three and four miles an hour — a wide, rippling river with its own eddies and white caps flowing in an ocean often as smooth as a looking-glass!

When I could hardly stand the stifling heat, I looked with a longing eye at the sea, and wished that I could plunge into it and take a swim, but the sharks were there watching for food and prey.

After entering the "Doldrums," sharks had become far more numerous than before and were hardly ever out of sight. They swam round our vessel when we did not move, and when we did move they followed in our wake. The sharks frequenting the equatorial regions are more voracious than in other parts of the ocean, — they are the tigers and leopards of the sea. Woe to the man who falls into the water when they are about, for he is sure to be devoured by them.

The sailors have a superstition that when a man is

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ill on board, the sharks know it, and follow the ship until the man dies and is thrown overboard.

Many of these sharks were surrounded by tiny little fish which the sailors call pilots. These seem to feed on the vermin which adhere to the skin of the sharks. These little pilot fish were not more than four or five inches in length and were very pretty to look at.

The structure of the mouth of the sharks is such that they have to turn on their backs in order to swallow. What terrible rows of teeth they have, — so sharp, just like the teeth of a saw! With a heavy hook made fast to a chain we captured one that had seven rows of teeth.

I often shuddered when I looked at some huge shark following the ship, and retired instinctively from the stern for fear lest something should give way and I should fall into the sea. Nothing could then have saved my life — I should have been dragged down by one of those voracious creatures, and then eaten piece-meal.

Once in a while there was not a shark in sight — they were simply hovering around under the surface of the water waiting for prey. The sailors often said : “ Let a man fall overboard, and they will appear soon enough ! ”

Some sharks love the solitude of the open sea —



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others like to be near the shore. There are many kinds of these fierce creatures. Some, which are called the pelagic sharks, are the largest inhabitants of the sea, after the whale, and there are several species or varieties. Some of these attain a length of from twenty-five to forty feet.

As I watched the water, I would see a hammer shark, so named on account of his head, with a thick body of about nine feet in length; this species is reputed one of the most ferocious. Then a blue shark would make its appearance, and one day I saw a specimen belonging to the genus *Carcharodon*. He was an enormous one; the captain said that sometimes they attain a length of forty feet. But the largest of all these monsters of the deep are found in the Pacific Ocean, and attain a length of fifty feet.

CHAPTER V

CROSSING THE EQUATOR — THE SOUTHEAST TRADE-
WINDS — THE EQUATORIAL CURRENT — THE GULF
STREAM — STRUCK BY A TORNADO — LAND IN SIGHT —
AFRICA AT LAST — THE GREAT FOREST.

IN spite of the counter currents and contrary squalls, we crept slowly southward to meet the southeasterly winds, the captain taking advantage of every opportunity offered by the weather. After many discouragements and setbacks, we at last crossed the equator.

One afternoon a squall rose and drove us southward. After it had blown over, it became calm again. Then we saw, far away, ripples on the ocean, which gradually came nearer and nearer. These ripples were the forerunners of the southeast trade-winds that were coming towards us. Soon after we felt a cool, gentle breeze, and a shout of joy came from all on board. Our imprisonment in the "Doldrums" was over!

The southeast trade-winds were at first very light, for we had reached just where they were dying away, close to the region of the "Doldrums," but towards

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evening the breeze freshened. The next day white caps covered the sea, and life became pleasant once more. The southeast trade-winds were strong, and now we had the same beautiful blue sky as under the northeast trade-winds, and the same beautiful white and often transparent clouds.

These southeast trade-winds have also blown from time immemorial — the hot air of the South African continent bringing about the same results as the hot air of the desert of Sahara.

Then we tacked ship, and laid our course towards the west coast of Africa. I asked the captain if I should have to pass again through such dreadful regions as that of the "Doldrums" when I returned home. "No," he replied; "on the return trip from the equatorial regions of Africa, we sail with the southeast trade-winds, south of the equator, to avoid these dreaded 'Doldrums,' carried onward by the southeast trade-winds until a few hundred miles off the coast of Brazil; then we get into variable, and often light winds."

Then I thought that if our little ship were left to drift within the area of the northeast or southeast trade-winds, in the course of time she would reach the South American coast, then drift gradually northward, and, if not stranded on the way, would get into the

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Gulf Stream, then be carried northward, passing the latitude of New York, whence we came.

The northeast and southeast trade-winds cause the initial movement of the currents which, in their course, make the current known to us as the Gulf Stream.

The two trade-winds, blowing continually from the hot regions of Africa, drive the hot water of the tropics from Africa westward, towards South America, and this current is known as the equatorial current.

The Bight of Biafra, in the Gulf of Guinea, may be considered the head waters of this equatorial current, which runs all the way from about eighteen to twenty-five miles every twenty-four hours, until it strikes the South American coast.

This equatorial current, or stream, is a shallow river of warm water, not deeper than three hundred feet. The temperature of the water is between 75° and 80° Fahrenheit at the surface, and not more than 60° at the depth of six hundred feet, — the deeper water not being so heated by the sun, of course, as the surface water. Besides, from below there is a continual rising or flow of cold polar water.

This equatorial current strikes the American coast about Cape St. Roque, some three hundred miles south of the equator. The obstruction of the land

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divides the current into two parts, one going southward, but the greater volume of water going northward, with great increase of velocity, for the simple reason that any current, even in a river, that finds an obstruction, runs more rapidly along the obstruction. So the equatorial current, which presses northward along the coast from Cape St. Roque and the Orinoco River, flows with great rapidity — from sixty to eighty miles in twenty-four hours. Then it passes the Caribbean Sea, turns westward, and follows the shores of the Gulf of Mexico at the rate of from thirty to sixty miles a day.

The Gulf Stream flows along the American coast, from which it is separated by a cold current from the icy north, forming what might be called a wide band separating the Gulf Stream from our shores. We ought to be thankful to this cold-water band, otherwise our climate would be much warmer.

Now we were sailing towards the west coast of Africa, — the innermost part of the Gulf of Guinea, situated somewhat near the equator. At last came the day when we were not more than one hundred and fifty miles from the mainland. In the afternoon of that day a dark, compact mass rose from the east, over the horizon, and became larger and larger, in spite of the contrary winds that struck against it. There was a contest between the two, and one had to get the mas-

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tery over the other. The captain was watching anxiously that part of the horizon. Finally he turned to me and said : " A tornado is going to burst upon us very soon. We must be ready when it strikes us." So all the sails were furled. The muttering of the thunder could be heard. The wind had died away, and the calm was the forerunner of the tornado.

In the meantime a grayish spot rose from the horizon under the black mass. Soon after, this great spot rose with great rapidity, driving and breaking the dark mass into black clouds that flew wildly in every direction. The tornado was coming. We saw the sea enveloped with spray, and in an instant it was upon us. Fortunately we were ready. The wind blew with terrific force, our little vessel careened over, the gunwales on the starboard side almost reaching the sea. The force of the wind was so great that it prevented the sea from rising into big waves.

Then came rain, lightning, and thunder. Never in my life before had I heard such thunder, or seen such vivid lightning, or such pouring rain. I was constantly afraid that we would be struck by lightning, and I had powder enough on board to blow the ship to pieces. Gradually the thunder and lightning moved away from us, and the wind, though strong, moderated. By that time it was night, and as dark as pitch.

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When I awoke in the morning the wind had gone down, and I saw an island covered with forest. After a noon observation we found that it was Princess Island, belonging to Portugal, and situated about one hundred and fifty miles from the coast of Africa.

Two days after we came in sight of the mainland, and saw the great African equatorial forest as if rising from the sea. Far inland were mountains clad with trees to their very tops. The forest was inhabited by numerous savage tribes who had never seen a white man, and ferocious and strange looking beasts, seen in no other part of the world. In that great forest I was to live, and we skirted the shore until we found a proper anchorage. Then we saw numerous canoes, filled with men paddling towards us. These came on board and inquired if we wanted to barter for ivory with them. They had, they said, a number of big elephants' tusks in their village. I replied that I did not want to trade with them, but would like to stay with them and kill wild beasts and birds, and stuff them, and collect also all the butterflies and insects I could, and keep them, and take these to the country of the white man. We told them to go back and to tell their king that I was coming. One canoe remained behind to take me ashore.

How strange was that great forest! Not a tree



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was like those we had at home. Their leaves were different in shape, and some of them were large and beautiful. Many of these trees bore brilliant flowers. Some were as big as the California trees. The foliage was so thick that for long distances in the forest the sun, the moon, the stars, and the sky could not be seen.

There were hunting and other paths leading from one village to another. The way from one tribe to another was often very tedious. At a certain season of the year there was great thunder, lightning, and rain, preceded by tornadoes. This was called the rainy season. Then there was a time without rain. This was called the dry season, or *enomo*.

I had no white man with me—and as time went on I learned many languages or dialects, so that I could talk to the people. When I was absent, the kings or other friends took care of the goods I left in their hands.



CHAPTER VI

WANDERING THROUGH THE FOREST AND LEARNING
THE COUNTRY—I REACH KING MOMBO'S VILLAGE
—RECEIVED BY THE KING—HIS FEAR OF WITCH-
CRAFT—VISITS MY DWELLING AND RECEIVES
PRESENTS FROM ME.

AFTER wandering in that part of the great forest north of the equator and seeing many of its wild and fierce inhabitants — and hunting and killing many strange animals and birds — I came back to the coast and sailed along its shore southward until I came to several large rivers, the Nazareth, the Mexias and the Fernan-Vaz, — the Nazareth forty miles, and the Fernan-Vaz seventy miles south of the equator. These rivers pour forth a great quantity of fresh water far out to sea. They flow through the great forest, and their shores are inhabited by many tribes. I lived among them a long while, and was greatly beloved by the people and their chiefs, many of whom became my good friends. Wherever I went I was sure of a hearty welcome. I felt perfectly safe among them. My word was law. I was known all over the land as the Oguizi, or “Spirit.”

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Often I used to go all alone in my canoe from one place to another. Strange indeed was the life I led. I loved to roam alone and be by myself, and often I slept in the forest without any companion. It happened that one day I came to a village where I landed and asked the people who had seen my canoe arrive and had come to meet me if the place was the residence of King Mombo — for I knew that I had come to that part of the forest where he ruled. They answered that it was and told me to follow them. We walked together through the strange-looking street that made up the village. The houses were small, built of the bark of trees, each having one door but no windows.

Back of the houses and between them and the forest were numerous plantain trees with here and there a banana tree. The leaves of these were very large; some were over six feet in length and eighteen or twenty inches wide. The plantain is much like a banana, only much larger, and is cooked by the natives when green and used by them as bread is by us at home. I was led to a large building where the people met to discuss subjects of importance. It was simply a roof supported by a number of pillars. A stool made of a single piece of a tree was brought in for me and another one for King Mombo.

After I was seated, some man went to tell the king

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that a stranger had come to see him. King Mombo and his people had heard of me, for my reputation had gone far and wide, as I have said, and whoever met me knew from the description they had heard of me that I was the good Oguizi, with long, straight black hair hanging over his shoulders, who did harm to nobody and was the friend of so many people.

Soon after, I heard the sound of the “kendo” — an emblem only worn by chiefs — a rude bell of iron in one piece with a long handle of iron also and sounding like a cow-bell. The sound grew louder and louder, until King Mombo stood before me. He was tall and slender; on his body were several scars from wounds he had received in wars, but he had a kind face, and was gray-headed. Round his neck was a necklace of leopards’ teeth and round his waist a belt of leopard skin on which hung a number of amulets or charms called by the people “mondahs.” These were to protect him from harm.

Some of his slaves and several of his wives set before me a number of bunches of plantains, several baskets of sweet potatoes, a goat, several chickens, and nine eggs. These presents showed that I was welcomed.

After a short pause King Mombo said: “Oguizi, I am very glad you have come to see me. Remain

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with me a long time. There is plenty of game in the forest, and among my people and slaves are great hunters."

Looking at his people, he said to them: "Take good care of our Oguizi." Then he shouted aloud: "See how far my name and my fame are known. The Oguizi has come to see me," and as he said these words he raised his head proudly. The people shouted: "Great indeed is Mombo our king. Great is the Oguizi." The tomtoms made a great noise in honor of my arrival.

Then King Mombo called three of his wives and six of his slaves, and said to me: "These women are yours; they will cook for you, get water for you, and keep your house clean. These slaves are yours, and will do what you order them to do. I and my people will all do whatever you wish us to do."

Then the king's men went to fetch the things I had in my canoe. Among them were presents for the king.

A house was given to me not far from the one where King Mombo slept. It was divided into two rooms, and there were two beds in one of the rooms. These beds were simply flat surfaces made of the bark of trees, upon which were several pretty mats made by the king's wives. In the evening I went to see King



"When he saw these presents his face beamed with joy"





KING MOMBO

Mombo, and said to him: "To-morrow morning I will make your heart glad, for I have some presents for you."

"Not in the morning," he replied, "for I do not want my people to see what you are going to give me, for there is much witchcraft in our land, and many are killed by it. Often relatives bewitch those from whom they expect to inherit, and cause their death. Oh," he added, with fierceness in his eyes, "when we find wizards and witches we put them to death." After a pause, he resumed: "Kokolo, Kokolo," (which meant "Please") "do not tell any one that you gave me presents." Then he took hold of my right foot to add force to his request. Slaves do that to their masters when imploring for their lives, or asking not to be sold. I promised him not to tell, and he gave a great sigh of relief at my words. And as he left me he whispered in my ear, "Wait until it is dark, very dark, to-morrow before you send for me to give me my presents."

"It will be very dark when I send for you, King Mombo," I replied, and at my words he shook my hand gratefully.

In the middle of the night when everybody was asleep I saw in the dark two people entering my hut, and heard in a whisper: "It is I, King Mombo,



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and my faithful slave Rabolo. I come to get my presents."

I lighted a torch. It was Mombo. He had not had the patience to wait longer. His face and body were painted in different colors, and he was covered with charms to protect him against witchcraft. I set at his feet two brass kettles, a gun, a big bunch of white beads, three files, two discs of steel with flint for making fire, a red woollen cap, and two looking-glasses. When he saw these presents his face beamed with joy, and after thanking me profusely he and his slave Rabolo left, carrying with them the precious gifts. The king implored me again to tell no one of the things I had given him.

CHAPTER VII

SUPERSTITIONS OF KING MOMBO — VISITS TO THE
HOUSE OF HIS IDOLS AND HIS ANCESTORS — A
STRANGE MEAL FOLLOWED BY A STRANGE DANCE.

POOR King Mombo was, you will see, excessively superstitious. He was often unhappy on that account. He was thinking almost all the time that some of his relations wanted to bewitch him in order to inherit his wealth, which was composed chiefly of wives and slaves. He wore what he firmly believed to be most potent "mondahs," charms against witchcraft and evil spirits. He had a little idol, having the shape of a woman, called Makaylay, which he always carried with him wherever he went. At night he kept her by his side.

He was also a great believer in dreams, for these foretold to him what was to happen, and forewarned him of dangers to come. Often after something had taken place he would say to his people that he had had a dream in which the spirits of his ancestors came to him and told him of what was about to happen. He was most particular about his food. His forbidden food was buffalo meat, and no amount of gifts on my part could have tempted him to eat buffalo.

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Here and there throughout the village were sacred houses, where spirits came to dwell during the night, while others had been built for idols.

One day King Mombo and I entered the house of Abamboo, one of the wandering spirits in which they believe. The face of the king showed that he was inspired with deep reverence. A little fire was burning. On one side was a bed for Abamboo to sleep on when he came to visit the village at night.

"Abamboo is a spirit which can send to men a great deal of evil," said Mombo. "We have to do a great many things to propitiate his good will. He lives in many places, especially among the skeletons of the dead. He walks through the country, and if he is angry at any one he causes him to fall sick, and often condemns him to die. We cook food for him. We give him game, plantain, and sugar-cane, which we deposit in the forest."

Next we entered the house where Pangeo and his wife Aleha dwelt. Pangeo was about two feet high. His tongue was of iron, sharp-pointed and came out about two inches from his mouth. His eyes were of iron; his legs were short and he had a very big stomach; his body was painted of different colors.

Aleha was of the same size. Her eyes were made of pieces of looking-glass. She wore enormous earrings

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of brass, had bracelets of brass, and her ankles were adorned with brass rings. She wore a necklace of cowry shells. King Mombo stood in awe before the idol; he spoke to Pangeo and told him how much he loved him, and then spoke to Aleha, saying the same to her.

After that, we entered the house of Makambi and Abiala. Makambi was a big idol, about three feet high. He wore a feather headdress and held a spear in his hand which he was ready to throw; his eyes were carved and painted red.

Abiala, his wife, held a pistol in her hand — which she had taken from her husband, as Mombo said to me in a whisper.

The king stood before Makambi and Abiala and told them how much he loved them — as he had done to Pangeo and Aleha. “You know I love you both,” he added in a loud voice. “I bring to you the products of the hunt and of the earth. Take good care of me — watch over me.”

After leaving the house of Makambi and Abiala, King Mombo returned to his house and I to mine.

The head wife of King Mombo was called Ogan-daga; she was dressed with three strings of beads round her waist, and wore over thirty heavy brass rings on each of her legs. She it was who cooked the food of the king.

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Often Mombo would walk in the street when it was quite dark, and talk about me to his people, and say how much he loved me. Then he would shout aloud, so that all his people could hear: "Chally the Oguizi, I love you. I am your friend. All I have is yours — my slaves are yours — my plantations are yours — my wives are yours — my daughters, my sons, and my nephews are yours. You can say to them 'Follow me,' and they will all follow you. Oguizi, all my people love you." And when the people heard this, they would shout "Yo — yo." ("That is so, that is so.")

Not far from King Mombo's sleeping-house, and back of it, was a strange little building which was called the Alumbi house. Every time I saw the king enter this place he came out of it with his body painted with ochre of different colors, and his face always looked very thoughtful. When inside I could hear him making loud invocations. One day he came out more daubed than I had ever seen him before. His body was covered with white, red, and yellow. I thought he looked savage and awful.

My curiosity became very much aroused in regard to the Alumbi house. One day, as King Mombo came out of it I went up to him and said: "King, show me the inside of the Alumbi house."

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After hearing my words, he looked at me, as if trying to read my thoughts. He remained silent for a little while, and then said : "Oguizi, you can go inside and see for yourself, and I will accompany you." He opened the door ; we entered, and he shut the door behind us.

What a strange and unexpected sight met my eyes ! Along the walls were large cakes of colored clay. These were black, white, and of different shades of yellow and red. Upon each stood the skull of a man which seemed to look at me and say : "What are you doing in our abode? You do not belong to our race." Mombo marked his body with the ochre of two of the cakes, muttering words I could not understand. Then he said to me in a whisper : "The skulls you see here are those of my kinsmen. They were great and valiant men in their day. It is the custom in our country when a man much greater than all other men dies to cut his head off after his death and then put it on a cake of clay and let it decay there. Then the mass of ochre is kneaded together and dyed and the skull is always kept on the cake that belongs to it. Oh, Oguizi, these skulls belonged to great forefathers of mine. They were never afraid of war. Here on the cake of white clay is the skull of Olenga-Yombe. He died a very old man, and when young he was the

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greatest warrior of his time. He founded our clan and our tribe. He was the most dreaded by our enemies of all their foes. He burned many villages. His people believed all he said, for he was wise. He had many wives and many slaves, and his 'oyana' [idol] granted him all he asked. He lived about three hundred rainy seasons ago. At that time our tribe was much further inland, towards the country where the sun rises."

Then, pointing out to me a cake of a deep yellow color, he said: "Oguizi, the skull there is that of Jombouay. He led us through the forest and had many wars, for our ancestors had to fight many tribes who opposed them before coming to this part of the forest where we are now settled."

When he had finished telling the history of the men whose skulls were before me, he said: "Oguizi, the spirits of these men are hovering in the air above us; when I invoke them to protect me and our clan and tribe, they come round us and protect us. They have saved my life many times."

Then we left the Alumbi house. That evening Mombo walked in the street of the village and invoked the spirits of his ancestors, calling each by name. He invoked especially the spirits of Olenga-Yombee and of Jombouay, saying to them: "Look at the Oguizi;

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you never saw him during your lives. But Mombo, your kinsman, has him in his village."

The following day King Mombo came to me and said: "Oguizi I want you to eat with me to-morrow — I will have the fattest of my goats killed and some chickens. These will be cooked in fresh palm oil that has just been made." "I will," I replied. Then he called Ogandaga, his head wife, and said to her: "Prepare a meal for to-morrow. Have the fat goat killed and also a few chickens, for the Oguizi and I are going to eat together." When I had accepted the invitation we separated, the king looking happier than usual.

Little did I know what King Mombo intended to do, and why he had invited me to eat with him, and his reasons for doing so. I will however recount to you now what I was told afterwards.

The following day, while Ogandaga was cooking our dinner, Mombo went into the Alumbi house and took in his hands the skull of his great ancestor, Olenga-Yombee, and said: "Olenga-Yombee, my great beloved ancestor, see that I make the great Oguizi love me." Then he scraped with a knife a little of the forehead of the skull. The scrapings fell into a small wooden bowl which he had taken with him. He replaced the skull on its own cake of ochre,

near by, and went away.

After a while Ogandaga told me to be ready. The bottom of a canoe made our table ; baskets on which were our plates, and cocoanuts for glasses ; our fingers were to be our knives to the custom of the country, every dish before our eyes, and that was in the jug before we did eat and drink.

The king and I sat down on the ground. Then he gave me some of the meat which had been served in a wooden dish at that time. As soon as he saw that I had eaten from my plate he seemed overjoyed, for he thought I would love him.

Then he invoked in a loud voice his great ancestor, Olenga-Yombé.



"The king and I sat down opposite each other"



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that ancestor, which then becomes part of your own blood. Hence you must love the person who is a descendant of the man to whom the skull belonged.

The whole population of the village was present while we were eating, and shouted : "Great is Mombo, the friend of the Oguizi !"

After our meal the king disappeared and went into the Alumbi house. When he came out, his appearance had quite changed. Now his body was painted in different colors. He was covered with "mondahs," or charms. He was chewing some of the clay which dyed his lips yellow. Then taking my two hands, he blew the ochre from his mouth upon them until they were entirely covered with it, and invoked the spirits of his ancestors, Kombé-Ratenon-Olenda and Olenga-Yombee, to be my friends, and watch over me.

That night there was a great dance. Singing and dancing went on together. At times women danced alone, and moved the muscles of their bodies in most ridiculous fashion. At other times men and women danced and sang together. The noise was very great, for there were over twenty tomtoms beating at the same time.



CHAPTER VIII

BAD LUCK OF MOMBO'S VILLAGE — ASCRIBED TO WITCH-
CRAFT — ARRIVAL OF A GREAT MEDICINE-MAN —
HIS INCANTATIONS — THE ACCUSED SOLD AS SLAVES.

THE people had been filled for some time with the fear of witchcraft. Two men had died away from the village; and, since, they had been unlucky in fishing and hunting. Certainly all this could not have happened without some one wishing the village bad luck. A great medicine doctor living far away had been sent for, and had arrived, and the ceremony to find out who were the sorcerers was about to take place.

One morning King Mombo and all his men assembled to listen to the words of the great medicine-man, and were seated cross-legged on the ground around him, all looking excited and with hatred in their eyes.

The medicine-man, whose reputation for power to find out sorcerers was known all over the country, was extremely ugly to look upon, and was weirdly dressed for the occasion. His teeth were filed sharp to a point. He was tall and slender, and about fifty years

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old. He had a treacherous and cunning eye. I could tell by his face that he would denounce people as guilty of witchcraft about whom he really knew nothing. His head, chest, and arms were painted with sacred ochre of different colors, likewise his eyelids. He wore around his waist a string of long grass upon which were hung several bells of iron. Near the medicine-man was the horn of a buffalo filled up with a sort of black powder made of skins and bones of snakes, dried brains of monkeys, and intestines of rare animals. He held in his hand a wicker rattle filled with snakes' bones, eagles' talons and monkeys' nails, which he shook during his incantations.

After each incantation the people shouted, "Ouganga, tell us who are sorcerers amongst us, so that we may kill them."

Another man was on the top of a slender tree, calling now and then upon Joko, a powerful spirit, and shaking the tree at the same time.

The medicine-man remained silent for awhile, as if in deep thought; then he made all kinds of contortions, and muttered unintelligible words. He took a knife and cut his hands in different places. The blood fell into a little wooden vessel, and he looked intently at his own blood, as if trying to find out something; then he danced, the queer bells round his waist making a

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strange sound. The people kept shouting: "Tell us, Ouganga, who are the witches and sorcerers that have brought bad luck to us in the hunt and in fishing, who made some of our people sick, and some of our people die? Ouganga, drink the 'mboundou,' then you will be able to tell us who they are."

Then roots of a tree called the "mboundou" were laid at his feet, and also a wooden bowl filled with water. The ouganga scraped the root of the "mboundou" into the water, which turned the color of the root, which was reddish, and then bubbled. He made incantations, and then drank the potion. Soon after his countenance changed, his eyes became bloodshot and glared. His veins swelled, and he looked as if he were drunk. Such was the effect of the "mboundou" upon him.

A man from the village named several of their own people whom they suspected of being sorcerers, and asked the ouganga to say if they were the ones. The ouganga seemed at first to speak incoherently. Then he said: "There are no witches or sorcerers in your own village. The guilty ones are living in another village."

At these words they shouted with one voice: "Tell us their names and the name of the village, for we want to make war on that village, unless they deliver up the sorcerers to us."

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Then the hollow voice of the ouganga was heard saying : " Okabi and Aquailay are those who are sorcerers. They are full of witchcraft."

" Death to Okabi and Aquailay !" shouted the people.

Okabi and Aquailay lived in a neighboring village, and were well known to all present, and, moreover, whispers charging them with sorcery had been rife for several years.

That night there was a great war-dance. The people invoked their guardian spirits. The next day they were going to get Okabi and Aquailay and make them stand the "mboundou" trial, and if the people of the village where these two men lived refused to deliver them up, then they would make war upon them and take them by force. Not only must the two men be delivered, but indemnity, in the form of slaves, must be given for the mischief, deaths, sickness, and bad luck generally these two men were supposed to have caused.

The next day, however, on their formal request, the two men were at once delivered up by their people, who had long suspected them of witchcraft. The brother of Okabi came and talked in his behalf, and finally, after a most eloquent speech, persuaded the people not to kill them, but to sell them as slaves. This



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was acquiesced in by the leading people of the two towns, and it was arranged that the relatives of the two men should share equally the proceeds of the sale. Both were to pay a certain part of their goods to the families of the men who had died. The accused could have submitted to the ordeal of trial by “mboundou”-drinking — which is almost always mortal, except to doctors — but they preferred to be sold as slaves.



CHAPTER IX

KING MOMBO GIVES ME THE STICK "OMEMBA"—I
LEAVE THE VILLAGE ON A HUNTING TRIP—PART-
ING INJUNCTIONS—A HERD OF HIPPOPOTAMI.

SOME days after the sorcery trial King Mombo sent for me.

When I arrived I saw that there were a great many people who had come from many different villages. The king was seated, and bade me sit by his side. He had an old silk hat on his head. His coat was split up the back to let the air in. Then ensued a great silence; no one dared to speak.

King Mombo rose. He held a stick in his hand, and said to me: "Oguizi, the stick I hold in my hand is known all over my country as belonging to me, and when I send word anywhere I send it with the messenger. This stick is called 'Omembra,' the snake, for it is twisted, and the carved head of a snake is at the top. Whoever carries 'Omembra' is my representative, and my people have to listen to him. Take this stick, and wherever you go carry it with you."

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Then he handed me "Omemba," in the midst of great shouts of approbation from his people and of the beating of the tomtoms.

"When you leave the country, return 'Omemba' to me," added the king.

I thanked Mombo for his important gift, and the people dispersed.

A few days after I had received "Omemba," I went to King Mombo, and said to him, "I am going to leave you soon. I wish to go all alone in a small canoe, so do not be astonished, if, when you awake some morning, you find that I am gone, but I shall not fail, before I leave your country, to bring back 'Omemba' to you, and say good-by."

Then I prepared my outfit and packed the things I wanted, among them a small round Waterbury clock, a powerful magnet, a music-box, and lots of matches, for these things added much to my power. When the people heard the clock and music-box, they thought they were spirits talking to me, and were full of wonder, and often afraid of them.

I took some ammunition and fish hooks, for I had to depend on fishing and hunting for my food. I had also some brass rods, and quite a number of bright-colored beads to give away to those who were friendly to me, for I should very soon have become a very

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poor uguizi if I had had nothing to give them. I also took a frying-pan, some quinine, and salt.

Among my weapons I had a double-barrelled breech-loading rifle, which I loved better than all my other rifles, for it was the most powerful weapon I had. I could load it either with steel pointed bullets, or with explosive shells. I had named this rifle "Bulldog." The only fault I found with "Bulldog" was that it was too heavy to carry, for it weighed sixteen pounds, on account of the thickness of the barrels and of its large calibre. "Bulldog" was somewhat short. When I carried it I always had a feeling that I was with my best friend, and one I could rely upon in case of great danger. No matter how huge or fierce the animals I encountered might be, I felt that "Bulldog" could kill them, for the steel-pointed bullets were large and powerful, and I had found out that they could pierce through four or five inches, and even more, of the hardest wood. So I knew what "Bulldog" could do. This feeling gave me confidence, and I aimed with greater steadiness, and I knew I had a shot to spare in case of merely wounding an animal.

"Bulldog" was well known among my native hunters, who looked at it with wonder and superstitious awe. They were always glad when "'Bulldog' was going with us. They used to say, "'Bulldog' never

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misses, and always brings death in its path. The elephants, hippopotami, and all the wild beasts fall dead when hit by the bullets of 'Bulldog.' They knew "Bulldog" among all my other rifles, and there was always great rejoicing among my men when, before our departure, I said to one of them, "Go and fetch 'Bulldog,' and carry it until we reach the hunting-ground," or when I carried it myself. "Bulldog" was so heavy that by the end of the day my shoulders, especially my left one, felt very sore. In the course of time my left shoulder became quite black from the effects of carrying "Bulldog," and other guns. A gun that is quite light to carry the first hour becomes heavy enough by the end of the day.

The eve of my departure I called Ogandaga, the head wife of King Mombo, and pointing out a box to her, I said: "Here is a box which is very precious, and I want you to take care of it. No man or woman must open it — neither King Mombo, nor yourself — for misfortune will befall whoever opens it. This precious box was of tin, waterproof, and contained the scientific instruments and books necessary to find my latitude and longitude, also the days of the week, of the month, the exact time in Greenwich or Washington, and wherever I was. In that box were also four watches, which had been made especially for





"Then he handed me 'Omemba' "

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use in astronomical observations. Ogandaga said that she would take great care of the precious box, and then, pointing out to her all the boxes containing my goods, I said: "These are also under your care." I gave her a beautiful necklace of large beads, for which she thanked me, and went away, and soon after returned with a slave to take the precious box to her house.

Then I called King Mombo, and said to him: "All my things that you see here I leave in care of Ogandaga." "They are safe," he replied.

That evening the king walked from one end of the village to the other, and shouted, so that everybody could hear: "The Oguizi will soon leave us for a while. I and Ogandaga will take care of his things during his absence. Let no one ever dare to touch them, and if any one tries to take any of them, he will have his head cut off."

The people answered: "He is our Oguizi. His things are safe, and would be even if we were not threatened with having our heads cut off."

Towards four o'clock in the morning, by moonlight, and when every one was asleep, I carried my outfit to a small canoe made of the trunk of a tree, and departed, paddling along the shore of the river. Just at daylight I heard the grunt of the hippopotami.

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These animals are called river horses, because their heads in a certain profile look very much like that of a horse.

At the sight of my canoe they gave a peculiar grunt and disappeared under the water and reappeared somewhere else, and did this several times. At times they rose so near me that I was afraid they would rise right under my canoe and overturn it. Then they might come and attack me in the water, which certainly would have been the end of me. Further on I met several other herds, but kept quite out of their way.

Leaving the hippopotami behind me I continued my way, when suddenly I thought I heard the sound of paddles and of human voices. I pulled my canoe as fast as I could among the thick reeds which lined the banks of the river, and was soon out of sight. I was hardly there when I thought of crocodiles. It was just the spot for them, for the river was here sluggish and with muddy banks. I felt very uncomfortable, for my canoe was not so very much above water and I might be attacked by a crocodile, hiding among the reeds. They are very voracious when hungry.

The voices came nearer and I saw a large canoe through a small opening. I counted twenty paddlers and saw three captives fettered with chains round



"The voices came nearer and I saw a large canoe"



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their necks. They were evidently slaves that came from some tribes further up the river. I waited a while and when I thought the canoe was out of sight I left my hidingplace.

I paddled close to the shore, often under the overhanging branches of the trees. I began to notice that a large eagle was following me, soaring above my head. Not knowing exactly what the eagle intended to do, and becoming suspicious that the big bird of prey might perhaps pounce upon me and tear my eyes out, I stopped, put my shot-gun to my shoulder and, as the great bird soared over my head, I fired. The eagle uttered a scream, then plunged downward and fell into the water near me. I took his talons as a trophy.

Ere-long it became so hot that I filled my panama hat with green leaves and dipped it now and then into the water to keep my head cool. Further along the heat became so great that I hauled my canoe ashore to rest in the shade of the forest. I found a rivulet of clear water close by, and there I lighted a fire and roasted two plantains and a part of a monkey King Mombo had given me. Then I lay under a tree and soon after fell asleep with "Bulldog" in my arms. When I awoke I looked at my watch—it was three o'clock. Soon after, I was paddling again. I was so

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interested in looking round that the time passed quickly. The height of the sun warned me that in about one hour more it would be sunset, and dark shortly afterwards, for under or near the equator the days and the nights are about equal, and it is nearly twelve hours between sunrise and sunset.

A short time after I saw a few plantain trees on the shore of a small creek. I paddled in their direction, when, a little further on, hundreds of plantain trees came in sight—then I saw a path through them, and hauling my canoe by its side, I landed, taking “Omemba” and “Bulldog” with me.



CHAPTER X

SOUNDS OF HUMAN VOICES—I ENCOUNTER REGUNDO
AND HIS WIFE, SLAVES OF KING MOMBO—OTHER
SLAVES—HUNTERS AND WARRIORS OF MOMBO.

I FOLLOWED the path. I had hardly walked fifteen steps when I heard the sound of an axe—some one evidently was chopping wood. The path was a well beaten one, showing that many people passed over it. The sound made by the axe became louder and louder as I advanced inland. Then I heard human voices, and stopped to listen. After a while I found that two people were talking to each other, but I was too far away to hear the language they spoke. I wondered if these two people would be friendly, or would run away at sight of me.

I advanced cautiously, and soon saw the roof of a house, then the whole house, which had a veranda; and under the veranda were a man and a woman talking to each other. The house was built of the bark of trees. The man was gray-headed, the woman likewise; they were almost naked and only wore a little strip of soft bark round their loins.

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I appeared suddenly before them, so that they did not even have time to rise. Both looked at me, appearing dumbfounded. They tried to get up, but fear had paralyzed both and they could not rise. I showed to them "Omemba," the stick of King Mombo, which they recognized at once. Then I saluted them in the Commi language by saying, "Mbolo." They answered, "A-ee," and returned the salutation by saying "Mbolo," and I answered "A-ee." This is the mode of salutation in King Mombo's country.

The sight of "Omemba" had somewhat calmed their fears. I saw by their appearance that they were slaves, for both had their front teeth filed to a point. The Commi people do not file theirs—these two people came evidently from a far country. The man said to me, in the Commi language, "Both my wife and I are slaves of King Mombo, and many more slaves owned by him are in the neighborhood, on different plantations."

His wife went inside of her house and brought me out a stool and the tail of an elephant to kill the flies which bothered me, and they both bade me welcome and asked me to stay with them.

Strange indeed was the appearance of Regundo, for such was the man's name. One side of his face was painted with red ochre, the other with white; a broad

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yellow stripe adorned the middle of his chest ; the circuits of his eyes were also daubed with color. In the middle of his forehead was a round, white spot. He had evidently just made his toilet, for the colors looked fresh. He was also covered with charms or "mondahs." His wife's face was also painted. She wore large iron rings in her ears.

On the roof of Regundo's house were skulls of antelopes with their horns, skulls of wild boars, leopards, monkeys, and other animals, evidently apes, unknown to me, but the heads of which resembled, somewhat, human heads. Six large elephants' skulls were lying in front of the veranda — under which hung in a line sixty-three elephants' tails.

As I was looking at them, Regundo said, " These are the tails of the elephants I have killed. I have been a great hunter all my life, but now I have given up hunting, and I send but very little game to my master, King Mombo. But there are hunters here who are younger than I am, and who go much into the forest in search of elephants and other game."

While Regundo was talking his wife went away, but soon returned with a chicken that was a kind of bantam, tied by the legs, a basket of sweet potatoes, a bunch of plantains, and four eggs, and laid these at my feet. My talking to them in a language they

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could understand, and the sight of "Omemba," had reconciled them to me. They had also heard, before I came, that I was a great friend of King Mombo.

I looked round. I saw, at a little distance, a number of small houses together, also built of the bark of trees. As soon as Regundo saw me looking at them he said: "Those are houses of slaves belonging to King Mombo. He has many slaves; some of them are old, and he has inherited them from one of his brothers."

He had hardly uttered these words when I saw a number of men and women coming towards the houses. The women carried heavy bunches of plantains, or baskets filled with manioc roots. Most of the men had axes with them, and were returning from the forest, where they had been felling trees for new plantations.

"Those people are the slaves of King Mombo," said Regundo. "There are others that live further on in the forest. The brothers of the king, and some of his people, also have plantations and slaves not very far from here, higher up the river and in the forest."

I went towards them, and when they saw me they stood still. I raised "Omemba," which they recognized at once as the stick of King Mombo, their master, and which reassured them.

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These slaves, from their appearance, seemed to belong to many different tribes. Some belonged to tribes which filed their front teeth sharp to a point. Others had their four upper and lower front teeth pulled, this being considered beautiful among some tribes. Some had two upper middle front teeth somewhat filed in the middle. They also varied in the color of their skins; some were quite black, others less so, and some dark-brown color. Many shaved their eyebrows, and two women wore rings in their noses.

They were all more or less tattooed. This form of adornment among the Africans is not done without pain; the skin is cut in such a manner that it is made to stand up in small ridges.

Regundo soon rejoined me, and told the slaves that the great Oguizi, of whom they had heard, was before them.

When I was talking to these slaves, four or five men made their appearance. They looked like great warriors. They carried with them long, single-barrelled flint-lock guns, of heavy calibre — the only kind of guns the natives like. They are called "tower guns," and are made in England especially for the West African trade.

They were followed by queer-looking hunting dogs, which at once began to bark furiously at me.

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These dogs seemed half starved, they were so lean. They had short hair, straight ears, a somewhat elongated muzzle, with powerful jaws and sharp teeth. Their tails were curly, a sign of their being thoroughbred. They were not large, and had rather long legs for their size. They were yellow and white, or black and white. Some were almost all of one color.

Then Regundo, pointing to one of these four men, said: "This man is Oshoria; he is the greatest hunter among us all, and knows not what fear is. He hunts all the time, and spends many days in the forest by himself; and when he finds no game he has to feed on berries, nuts, and fruit. He knows every part of the forest for a long way."

I looked at Oshoria. He was a fine-looking man, about five feet seven in height, well proportioned, with broad chest, and strong, muscular arms and legs, and small feet. He had broad, thick lips, deep, searching, and suspicious-looking eyes, which seemed to look all round at the same time, as if expecting danger everywhere, and he had a very determined face. He was not much tattooed. His teeth were not filed. After eying him I said to myself: "Regundo is right. The whole appearance of Oshoria shows that he is a cool and brave man, who knows not what fear is."

Then Regundo, pointing out three other men,



"He had a very determined face"



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who had come with Oshoria, said to me: "These three men are great hunters also, and the equal of Oshoria in fearlessness, but are not quite as successful in killing game. Their names are Ogoola, Ngola, and Quabi. When King Mombo makes war, he always calls upon these four men to follow him, and they are always in his canoe."

I looked at Ngola. He was tall, very thin, of reddish-black color, with piercing eyes and a bold, daring countenance. The scars on his body showed that he had followed King Mombo in war. One cut on one of his shoulders had been a terrible one, judging from the scar, and had been inflicted by a heavy machete.

Quabi was thick and short, the counterpart of Ngola, and was very black. No negro could have been blacker. He was blue-black. He also had scars on his body — from the wounds he had received when he followed King Mombo in warfare. He came from a far country and had been sold by his relations when very young, so he had forgotten the language of his people. By merely looking at him one could see that he was brave.

Ogoola was of medium height, with a bold countenance, a real fighting chin; his eyes like those of Oshoria seemed to look all around at the same time in the same wandering and restless way. No scars were

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to be seen on his body, for he was so quick of motion and so expert with his shield that no spears, arrows, or bullets had ever been able to strike him. So quick were his eyes when watching the motions of his antagonist, that he seemed always to guess the time when a spear was thrown or an arrow shot or a gun fired at him. Then he would either jump sideways, or bend low, or even fall on the ground to escape the shot. He attributed his escape to a powerful "mondah," or charm, in which he had great faith. He was of medium height, and he had come into the possession of King Mombo when a boy.

"No leopard," said Regundo to me, "can approach its prey as these hunters can the wild beasts. They are the bravest and best hunters of King Mombo."

I called these four fierce-looking fellows to me and shook hands with them. They looked shyly at me, for they had never seen a white man before, though Regundo had. I gave each of them a steel disc and a flint, to make fire with, with which they were delighted. When I returned to Regundo's house his wife had prepared a meal for me of boiled antelope meat and plantains. In the meantime she had made ready the little house that I was to occupy while with them. It was quite small, about nine feet long and six feet wide. The walls, made of bark, were about



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five feet in height, the top of the roof about eight feet, and made of palm leaves; the sticks supporting the leaves were close together and made very secure to prevent leopards at night getting through and seizing the inmates in their sleep. The door was made of the bottom of an old canoe.

Being tired, I bade good-night to Regundo, who handed me a lighted torch, and after getting inside I looked carefully all round and under the bed to see if there were snakes, scorpions, or centipedes about. Then I lay down to sleep without undressing, wearing my shoes. I took my two revolvers from my belt and put them under my head, and laid "Bulldog" by my side. Such was the way I went to sleep almost every night, and even without fearing danger, prudence made me do so. In that way I was ready for a fight at once in case of any sudden emergency. As I fell asleep I heard the voice of Regundo calling on the spirits of his ancestors.



CHAPTER XI

WONDER OF THE NATIVES AT MY WATERBURY CLOCK,
MAGNET, MATCHES AND MUSIC-BOX — CHARACTER
OF MOMBO'S PLANTATION.

THE following morning I got up before any one, and immediately wound my Waterbury clock and hung it on the wall under the veranda. "Tick-tock," it went. Close to it I put my music-box, which immediately began to play, my magnet, and a box of matches. Then I went back into my little house and kept quiet there watching through a crack to see what would happen outside.

After a while Regundo came out. The noise of the clock and of the music-box attracted his attention. He looked at them with wonder, but did not dare to approach them. He went to his house and soon came back with his wife, and the two kept looking and listening to the music and the tick of the clock. Soon Oshoria, Ogoola, Ngola and Quabi made their appearance and these warriors, who had faced death so many times without fear, were afraid. They all remained silent and spellbound before the Waterbury clock and the music-box.

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I came out and we saluted each other. Regundo, pointing with his finger to the clock, said: "Oguizi, are there many spirits in this box? Are they speaking to you now, or are they talking among themselves?"

I did not answer, but laughed at his question. Then they all went away.

It is wonderful how fast news travels in the forest, and the news of my arrival, and of the clock, the music-box, and the matches had spread far and wide, and all the slaves of King Mombo, of his brothers, and of other great men of the neighborhood came in the afternoon to see the Oguizi and the wonderful things he had with him.

Quite a change had taken place in the appearance of all the women from the day before. They had made their toilet in order to appear beautiful before me. They had rubbed their bodies with a compound called "yombo," composed of oil and the powder made from a kind of odoriferous red wood which made their bodies fragrant; each wore a string of beads round her waist; their hair was filled with little clay-balls of the size of peas mixed with "yombo." They were more or less tattooed. Some had tattooing peculiar to the tribe to which they belonged, which was thought most beautiful among the people who used it. Some

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had two broad stripes made of a mass of small spots drawn from the back of the neck, joining another broad stripe imitating a belt which went round their waists. Others had different figures on their stomachs, others broad stripes starting from their shoulders, forming a triangle with the apex downward.

Each woman brought a present of food to me, a bunch of plantains, or a chicken, a basket of sweet potatoes, of peanuts, or eggs. I thanked them for their gifts and gave to each a string of beads to put round her waist. Then Regundo gave me a goat. Oshoria, Ogoola, Ngola, Quabi, laid before me a huge python about eighteen feet long, two monkeys, a gazelle they had killed in the morning, and said, "Oguizi, eat those." And the crowd shouted, "You shall never be hungry while you are with us."

Suddenly a man I had not seen before made his appearance. I noticed that the people looked upon him with reverence. He was entirely covered with charms, and his body was painted in different colors. He was old, tall, very dark, his teeth had been filed to a point. His body was tattooed all over with strange figures of beasts and men. His name was Angooka, and he was a great medicine-man who had the reputation of making most powerful charms by incantations. He made "mondahs" to protect men against witch-

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craft, and to make them invulnerable against spears, arrows, or bullets; others of his "mondahs" were supposed to give long life, and luck in hunting and fishing. When men started for warlike or hunting expeditions, they would always send for Angooka beforehand, and after numerous incantations he would tell whether they should go or not. Above all he could find out who were sorcerers or witches.

Angooka, who was on one of his plantations, had come with his slaves to see the Oguizi. The first thing he did was to look at the clock and music-box and listen to them; but after all, though a great medicine-man, he was not braver than the rest of the people on this occasion and he would not come near the clock or music-box.

To all the natives the clock and music-box were supernatural things far above their idols; spirits dwelt there talking to me in a language that was very peculiar and that nobody but I could understand. I did not wonder at their wonder, for they never had seen a clock or music-box in their lives. How could such noise come out unless there were life inside?

Raising my voice, I said: "Men and women look at me." Then I took my box of matches, and lighted one before them. A wild shout was uttered by all at the same time. They did not seem to believe their

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own eyes. I shouted again, "Look at me." Then came a profound silence. I lighted another match. Another shout of astonishment. Then with one voice they cried, "Great indeed is our Oguizi, the friend of King Mombo."

Then I took my magnet, and I told Regundo to give me the small knife he had by his side. He did so. I placed it next the magnet where it held fast. Another wild shout of wonder was the result. Then I told Ashoonga, Regundo's wife, to bring me an iron needle, one of their own make. Then they saw the needle hang to the magnet without falling, and as I put the needle upon the stool, upon which I had been seated, they saw the needle fly to the magnet. There was a great silence during this exhibition of the power of the magnet. Then rose a mighty shout from the throats of all, even from Angooka, the great medicine-man.

I did not want Angooka to be jealous, so I made friends with him and presented him with five matches. In his eyes it was a very great gift, for which he thanked me and then he invited me to come to his plantation. Then I called Regundo and Oshoria, and told them to fill their pipes with tobacco, which they did. "Put them in your mouths, I will light them with this," I said to them, showing them a match at the



"Then came a profound silence. I lighted another match."



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same time. As they seemed afraid, I said, "Be without fear, for I, the Oguizi, am your friend."

I lighted a match, put it over the pipe of Regundo and ordered him to smoke. When they saw the smoke coming out of the pipe, a tremendous shout rose. There was no mistake, their eyes did not deceive them; it was real fire. Then Oshoria wanted his pipe lighted also and after him nearly all the men and women filled their pipes and asked me to light theirs for them also. I lighted over fifty pipes.

After this I called the great medicine-man, and taking my watch out of my pocket held it to his ear. He jumped when he heard it tick, and shouted his astonishment. Then I went into my little house and came out with "Omembra," the stick of King Mombo, and at its sight they all shouted "We will obey you." The penalty for any man taking "Omembra" without its being given to him by King Mombo was death.

The hunters and I became good friends at once, and almost every evening some of them came to see me. One evening as I was seated by a blazing fire which threw its light around us, I said to those about me, "Tell me how you travel and how you go hunting in this great forest." Regundo got up and replied, "In the forest there are many paths. These lead from one village to another, or from one tribe to another, or to



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the plantations. Among many tribes the paths used as highways of communication have to pass through the villages, and if one wishes to avoid those villages he has to go through the forest until he gets by. There are many hunting paths. These are not easy to follow, for they are little used, and often they are very intricate, and it is difficult to find the way back. There are also paths used to mislead people. Often these end abruptly in the forest, just as hunting paths do."



CHAPTER XII

KING MOMBO'S PLANTATION — WORK OF THE SLAVES
IN CLEARING AND CULTIVATING THE FOREST —
STRANGE VILLAGE OF THE SLAVES — HOUSES OF THE
SPIRITS — REGUNDO'S ACCOUNT OF WITCHCRAFT AND
ITS PUNISHMENT — OVENGUA.

IN the midst of this forest, far away from their master, lived these slaves of King Mombo, and none tried to escape, because they were sure to be caught by the people of some other tribes, and become the slaves of their captors, and having a good master they knew that it was better for them to be under his protection.

The plantains or cassava or manioc fields were scattered all over the forest. One day, as Regundo and I were seated together, he said, "I am an old man. I rule over the slaves of King Mombo, and tell them what to do on the plantation. My wife and I are Apinjis, and I remember that we passed through several tribes coming down a big river, changing masters at different times until we came to King Mombo. But that was long ago; many rainy seasons have passed away since, for I was then a boy and now I am gray-headed."

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The slaves had a great deal to do to clear the forest. These clearings were in large patches. In some the trees had been cut and burned and only the huge trunks were standing. Thousands of plantain trees had been planted. In some patches or fields the plantain trees were large and bore heavy bunches, some bunches weighing over one hundred and fifty pounds each. In other patches the plantain trees were on the point of bearing ; in others the trees were smaller. In a word, the plantations or patches were so arranged as to bear fruit all the year round. The plantain tree, like the banana tree, bears only one bunch and then dies. During its life several shoots spring from the ground from the base of the trunk, and these are transplanted and in time bear fruit. No two crops are gathered on the same spot, for the bunches become quite small. So new parts of the forest have to be constantly cleared for new plantations.

There were also large fields of cassava or manioc. The manioc yields a large return. It is cultivated by cuttings, and one little stem is stuck carelessly into the ground, and produces in a season two or three large roots of the size of a yam. The natives boil the roots. When taken from the ground, they are very poisonous and have to be laid in running streams from three to five days before being eaten. Near the dwell-

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ings were large patches of ginger, of sweet potatoes, of yams, Indian corn, tobacco, peanuts, and wild hemp which the natives smoke. The ground in many places was covered with squashes and gourds of different sizes and shapes. There were vines running in every direction. The gourds were used as water vessels, or to hold palm oil and other kinds of vegetable oils made from the nuts of the forest.

These fields were cultivated by the women. Numerous lime trees, covered with limes of different sizes were to be seen in different directions. There were many plants covered with small red peppers.

Almost every day one or two canoes were loaded with the products of the plantations, and with game, and were despatched to King Mombo.

Not far from Regundo's house was the sacred or holy tree. It was a kind of india-rubber tree, which had grown to its present size from a cutting Regundo had planted years before. The people believed that as long as the tree flourished the place where they lived was a good one for their settlement; but if the tree were to die it would be a sign that the spot had become unlucky, and that witchcraft had taken possession of the place. If the cutting when planted dies, it is an omen that the place chosen will not be a lucky one and in that case the place is abandoned at once.

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As usual on such occasions, a powerful charm or "mondah" had been buried by the medicine doctor, with many incantations to keep witchcraft away from the settlement.

"The 'mondah' that is buried there," said Regundo, "was made of three skulls of chimpanzees, five heads of monkeys, three heads of snakes, one leopard's skull, the talons of several eagles, and charms made by the medicine doctor, of which nobody but he knew the composition. Under the gate or arch through which you passed when you came, another powerful 'mondah' was buried by another great medicine man, who had come from a far country and had been sold to King Mombo. He is now dead, but the power of the 'mondah' he made, and which is buried there, is very great."

Regundo had implicit faith in the powers of these two "mondahs" under the arch and by the india-rubber tree, for he and his wife had always been well since he had settled on that spot.

Not far from Regundo's house were several little houses, standing by themselves, and not big enough for human beings to live in. Calling Regundo, I asked him what these houses were for? He answered with a great deal of solemnity — "The nearest one to us, which is also the largest, is the house of Okookoo, a great spirit; the second is that of Abamboo, called also



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Jockoo by some of the slaves ; the third one is that of Mbuiri, another spirit ; and the fourth is the great and powerful idol Makambi, who watches over us and often talks to us during the night."

On our way back to his house Regundo said : "Oguizi, we all dread Ovengua."

"Who is Ovengua, and to what tribe does he belong?" I asked.

"Oh," replied Regundo, "if he were a man I should not be afraid of him, for I am afraid of no man when I have my gun with me. He is a spirit, and we dread him very much. He is a great catcher of men. He wanders incessantly through the forest, seeking always to kill men. We never see again those who are caught by him. By day he lives in a dark cavern, but at night he roams freely, and sometimes even gets into the body of a man, and beats and kills all those who come out in the dark. When Ovengua gets into the body of a man, that man must be killed and his body burned to ashes — not a single piece of bone must remain, lest a new Ovengua arise from it. When a bad man dies, the bones of his body leave the place where he was left, one by one, and become an Ovengua. There is much witchcraft in our land, Oguizi. You have seen slaves of many different countries here ; witchcraft is in their country also. There is

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witchcraft in all the countries inhabited by the black man.”

Then, after a pause, he added: “Wizards and witches are the worst kind of people, for they bewitch men and women and cause them no end of sickness and trouble, and make them die. The spirit of witchcraft goes into the body of a man or woman, sometimes against his will; but often envy and hatred cause men and women to become wizards and witches. These are so cunning that they carry out their evil designs unknown to the people for months, nay, even for years, and keep on killing and giving bad luck to people without detection. They smile and appear friendly to those they want to bewitch, so they may not be suspected. When witchcraft enters people and gets possession of them, it gives them the greatest power for evil and they can do all they wish. They can make one have a long and painful illness, or make one die suddenly. They can also give one bad luck in hunting and fishing, they can bewitch your food and water and the road upon which you pass. Through witchcraft people sometimes appear in the eyes of other people to be animals or birds.” Then he shouted, with fierceness in his eyes, “Yes, our medicine doctors can find out wizards and witches after they have drunk the ‘mboundou.’”

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"What is the 'mboundou?'" I asked Regundo, though I had of course learned about it at the village of King Mombo.

"It is a tree," he answered, "that Aniambie, the good spirit, has given to us poor black men to enable us to discover those who possess the power of witchcraft. Our doctors drink the 'mboundou' without dying, and when they are under the influence of it, they have the power of divination, and find out who the sorcerers are. Then those accused of witchcraft appeal to the 'mboundou' to prove their innocence, and they drink it in presence of the people and of the doctor, who drinks it from the same bowl. If the accused falters and falls to the ground, he is a sorcerer, and we kill him and put him on a road where the bashikouay ant is, or we tie him to a tree and make cuts in different parts of his body, and fill these cuts with those little red peppers that are so strong, or we burn him slowly, or we cut him to pieces as soon as he falls."

"But," I said, "Regundo, this is terribly wicked, to make poor creatures die by being eaten slowly by the bashikouay ants, or from the fearful tortures of red peppers in their wounds, or by slow burning. If I were present, I think I would take 'Bulldog' with me and shoot the perpetrators of such deeds."

"But," Regundo replied, with much animation,



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“no punishment is big enough for wizards and witches. Our land is full of them. Still,” he added, as if to soften my displeasure and sorrow at such a story, “Oguizi, wizards and witches are almost always sold to the people of other tribes instead of being killed.”



CHAPTER XIII

THE NATIVE DOGS—HOW THEY HUNT THEIR OWN GAME WHEN THEY ARE NOT FED—THEIR WAYS OF ATTACK—THEIR USEFULNESS TO THEIR MASTERS IN WAR-TIME—OSHORIA'S STORY.

ONE morning I was surprised not to see a single dog on the plantation, and I wondered where they could have gone.

“Where are all the dogs?” I asked Regundo.

“Oguizi,” he replied, “all the dogs have gone to the forest. They act in this way when they are hungry. They found that we had no food for them, and, having gnawed all the bones they had hidden in the ground, they thought it was time to go and hunt by themselves, and feed on what they could catch. Often they spend the whole day hunting, and do not return before sunset, sometimes not until the next day, when they find out an old camp to sleep in. Dogs are very sly. They have a leader; they understand him, and they understand each other. One by one they leave the plantation and meet outside.”

I had been wondering, since I came, what the poor dogs had to eat, for no one ever gave them food.

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They seemed to feed only on the bones that were thrown to them. The hungry dogs were always watching the movements of the people, though they appeared as if asleep. But this was only a blind, for as soon as a house was left vacant, they immediately got up and entered the place to see if there were any food to steal. All these native dogs are great thieves, and wherever they have a chance they steal, and it is very seldom they miss the opportunity offered. As soon as they get a bone they go to a lonely spot where they are safe from the other dogs, and when tired of gnawing it, they hide it in the ground, and never forget the spot where they have left it when they want it again.

In the evening the dogs made their appearance before the houses of their respective masters. They had evidently been unsuccessful in their hunt, and had had nothing to eat, to judge by the pinched appearance of their stomachs. A few pieces of manioc, just enough to prevent them from dying of starvation, were thrown to them, after which they fell asleep, as they were very tired.

"It is not good for dogs to be too well fed," said Regundo to me.

After what Regundo had told me, I watched the dogs every day, and found that, though they belonged to different masters, they formed a pack amongst

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themselves, and that they understood each other thoroughly. I discovered that "Fierce" was their leader. When they wanted to go a hunting together, they did not bark. On the contrary, they were very sly, and looked at each other with a peculiar expression of their eyes, which meant one thing or another to them.

How "Fierce" had become their leader I could not tell, except that he could attack with fierceness, and could bite savagely. Physically he was the strongest of all the dogs; hence he ruled over the others. He was always the first to leave, and the others followed. He generally went to see the other dogs before they started. He always led in the attack, and seemed to prevent the other dogs from being too forward in the fray. When he retreated, they retreated, and in some way, unknown to me, each dog was given his proper position in the attack.

One morning when I got up I found that the dogs had again left, and no one had seen them go away, or could tell whither they had gone. "They are very hungry," said Regundo, "and will continue to go into the forest until they have killed some game, and thus have their hunger satisfied."

Towards sunset the dogs returned. What a sight they presented! their muzzles were red with the blood

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of the animals they had killed and eaten. Some were wounded. One had its ears cut almost in two. Another had the end of one of its ears bitten off. Another had the upper lip cut. Three had their backs somewhat lacerated. Suddenly Rogola said, "Where is my dog 'Spear' ? I do not see him among the others ; he must have been killed in his fight with the wild beasts." It was no doubt so, for "Spear" was never seen again. Regundo gave it as his opinion that the dogs that came in with their ears and lips cut, had fought with monkeys they had surprised on the ground. Those whose backs were lacerated had been wounded by wild boars ; and they had succeeded in killing some animal, and had devoured it ; hence their bloody muzzles.

Some of the men attended to the wounded dogs, and said that in a few days they would be all right again. The dogs had evidently fed well that day ; soon after their return they all were fast asleep under the piazzas of their masters' houses. Three days afterwards all the dogs that were not wounded disappeared again and went to the forest to hunt. They were evidently on the scent of game, for we heard them barking. Regundo took his gun, to be ready, but gradually their bark became fainter and finally died away. The game had escaped them.

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"Sometimes the dogs have great trouble in chasing an antelope," said Regundo to me, "for these animals are very fleet. Often they tire the dogs; these then gradually fall behind, and the antelope escapes."

Early the following morning Oshoria, Ogoola, Ngola, Quabi, and I went after antelopes. The men had their dogs with them. These were soon out of sight, and as we went along on the hunting path, my hunters would call them. After walking about three hours we heard the dogs bark. "They are running after an antelope," said Oshoria. The barking came nearer. Soon it was very close to us and we were watching intently when an antelope, followed closely by the dogs, dashed by us. We fired, and the beautiful animal fell dead. We had the greatest trouble to keep the dogs at a distance, and we could not do so until we had cut off the legs and some of the meat of the animal and thrown these to them.

In the evening, as my hunters and I were seated by a bright fire, they told stories of dogs.

Oshoria's story, which was the longest, was as follows: "Some dogs are very useful in time of war, for they can find men hiding behind trees, and warn us of their presence. One day, years ago, I was on the war-path. I had then a dog called 'Idombe.' He was very cunning, and followed me always in the forest in war

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times. I had trained him never to bark when he discovered a stranger, but to come back to me. At that time the enemies of King Mombo would lie in wait for his people along the paths in the forest, then attack them suddenly. Sometimes there were two or three together, and sometimes but one. I had gone to reconnoitre, and had Idombe with me. He was scouring the forest in every direction ahead of me as I went along. Sometimes I lost sight of him. Once when he reappeared and came towards me, when he was near enough he looked at me and made me signs to follow him, which I did, for I knew that he had seen something unusual. Suspecting danger, and fearing a sudden attack, I walked most carefully, at the same time stopping every few steps and looking around and even up into the trees. Suddenly Idombe barked fiercely, looking in a certain direction, turning towards which I saw a spear fly out and graze Idombe's body. This was followed by an arrow, which imbedded its head in a tree near him.

"I looked all around. At first I could see no enemy. Then I saw two men near together lying flat on the ground among the leaves; one had a bunch of barbed spears by his side, the other a bow and a bag filled with arrows. I came forward, giving the cry of King Mombo. This was immediately answered by the same



*“Just in time to see a huge male leopard spring upon
one of the dogs”*



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cry, which meant peace. These two men belonged to a friendly clan, whose warriors had come to side with King Mombo. Poor Idombe had a narrow escape.

“The next day I went again into the forest with Idombe. I had lost sight of him and wondered where he had gone, when I heard him give a certain cry of pain, as if some one were choking him. I went in that direction and came to a little pool of water where animals came to drink, for there were many foot-prints round it. Then I saw a very large python squeezing poor Idombe tightly within its powerful folds. The dog was dead, its head was already in the mouth of the big snake. It is the habit of these big pythons to lie by pools coiled round a tree of the color of their skin and wait for their prey; then they spring upon their victims and, squeezing them to death, swallow them slowly.

“Our dogs are brave and a number of them are not even afraid of leopards. These leopards, when they become man-eaters, like the meat of man better than any other. Some years ago a leopard prowling near our plantation succeeded, to our great sorrow, in killing and devouring two people, a man and a woman. Our idol said that we must go and hunt the leopard. Then, taking our dogs with us, we went in search of him. After a while we heard the fierce barking of



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the dogs. They had discovered the leopard's lair, and we came up just in time to see a huge male leopard spring upon one of the dogs and crush him between his jaws. With fierce glaring eyes he looked at us, then he let the dog drop from his mouth and lay flat on the ground ready to spring on one of us. But we were ready for the beast, and before he had time to spring we fired and killed him on the spot. The belt I wear is from the skin of this leopard."

When the leopard story was ended it was time to go to sleep, and we all left for our respective quarters bidding each other good night.



CHAPTER XIV

A GREAT HUNTING-FEAST — “ROONDAH” — DIFFERENT
VIANDS OF THE MENU — SPEECHES AT THE BANQUET
— MUSIC AND DANCING — A WEIRD FOREST-SCENE
IN THE TORCHLIGHT.

ONE afternoon Regundo said to me: “Oguizi, all the hunters and all the men on the different plantations have gone into the forest to hunt, for we want to give a big feast. They will not return for three days. Some have gone net-hunting, others will make traps to catch game, and some hunters have gone with their guns.”

I had accustomed myself to eat the food of the natives. I often fed, while hunting, on fruits, berries and nuts. I ate all that came in my way — elephant, crocodile, buffalo, antelope, monkey, and all kinds of strange animals—and, when starving, I ate even snakes. Bread had been unknown to me since I had lived in the country. Plantain and manioc were my bread when I could get them. In a word, I ate whatever I could get; it was better to do so than to die of starvation.

During the absence of the men, I saw that the women were preparing food; large wooden mortars

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were filled up with manioc, a root which had been left to soak in the water. The manioc was pounded into a paste which was boiled and became thick and firm. This paste was then shaped into long loaves, enveloped with plantain leaves, these being used instead of the paper we should use at home. These loaves can be kept quite a number of days. To the palate the manioc is somewhat sour.

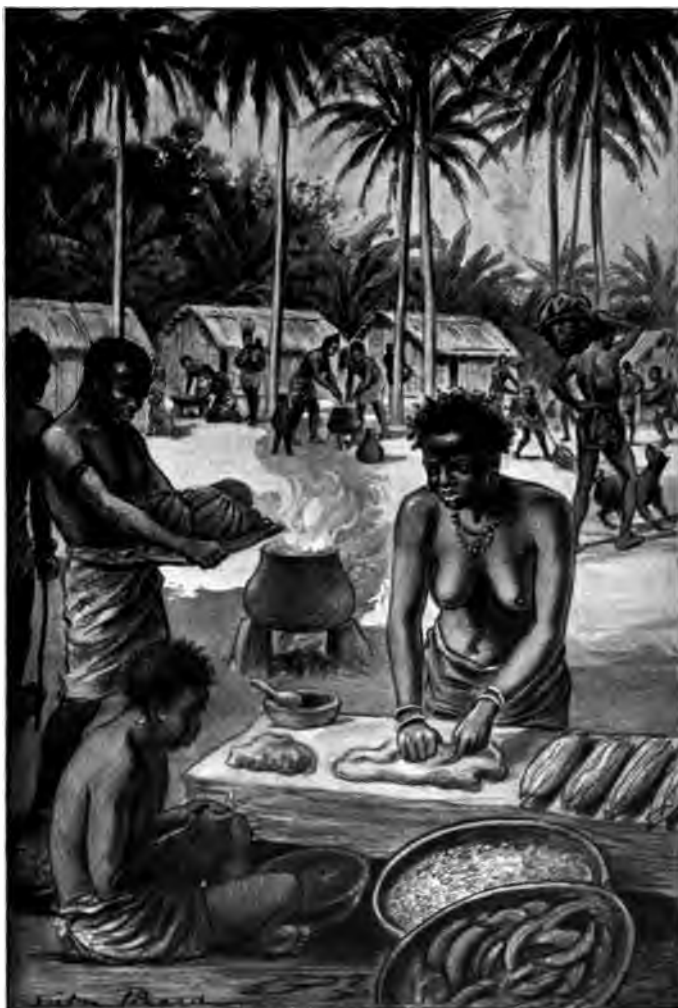
Some women had been collecting njavi nuts, which come from one of the most beautiful and largest trees of the forest. They boiled the seed, which they mashed afterward on hollowed-out boards, squeezing the paste with their hands, thus extracting the oil, which they poured into gourds.

The small children were busy skinning the squash-seeds, after which the seed was put into a mortar and pounded, forming a very fine paste to which, from time to time, a little njavi oil was added. This is mixed with meat afterwards.

One woman was busy making ndica. She had put seeds of the wild mango into a mortar, and pounded these into a paste, after which the paste was kneaded into the form of a big square cake and left to dry.

"I hope," said Regundo to me, "the men will return with much game, for I have 'gouamba.'"

"What is 'gouamba'?" I asked.



"The women were preparing food"



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He replied, "It is a craving for meat. When plantain or manioc is set before us day after day without meat or fish, we begin to look at the food with disgust."

Regundo was right in his description. I had had "gouamba" many times, and I longed for meat, experiencing the same effect as if at home one were fed day after day on bread and water.

But Regundo's wish was gratified. The hunters returned with a great quantity of game. The most successful were those who had gone net-hunting. Great numbers of long nets tied together had been spread in the forest, and the game had been driven into them.

Everybody was happy. Thank-offerings of game to the spirits "Olombo" and "Mombo" were taken into the forest for them to eat.

That day Regundo made a great offering of food to "Abamboo," game, plantains, nuts, sugar-cane, ground-nuts, and placed them carefully in the forest. On his return he shouted, "Abamboo, I love you. I offer the best of the food I have to you. Be good to me. Do not let sickness come to me, Abamboo. Kill my enemies, those who wish me evil by witchcraft."

He also made a sumptuous offering to "Mbuiiri."

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The following morning the plantation wore an unusual aspect. Every woman was busy cooking something. I waited around to see what.

In one pot a piece of elephant was boiling ; in another a piece of antelope was being cooked. Further on a big fat monkey was roasting on a bright charcoal fire. In another place, the ribs of a huge boar were being roasted in the same manner. Not far from where the boar was being cooked, a big piece of smoked hippopotamus was being boiled. Still further, a piece of smoked buffalo was also boiling, and the cook was scraping ndica into the pot, to add to the flavor of the meat, while another woman was mixing njavi oil with some other kind of meat. In one pot a piece of a large python was boiling.

When all the meats were nearly ready, the women cooked green plantains, took their skins off, cut them in two or three pieces, and then put them in earthenware pots, covering them with green plantain leaves, and in less than half an hour they were ready to be eaten. The plantain must be eaten when quite warm ; then it is mealy ; when cold it becomes hard, and is not very good.

In the meantime, some of the men were beating tomtoms furiously. Then men appeared with calabashes filled up with palm wine, a liquid coming

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from the sap of a species of palm-tree which, after it has fermented, becomes intoxicating.

Mats had been spread upon the ground. Baskets and home-made earthenware pots were to be used as dishes. Leaves took the place of plates, gourds of goblets, and fingers of forks.

When everything was ready, we seated ourselves cross-legged on the ground, upon the mats that had been spread. Regundo, Oshoria, Ngola, Ogoola, Quabi, the medicine doctor, or ouganga, and I were close together. Dishes containing the meat of the animals I have mentioned were put before us. I offered to Regundo some buffalo meat.

"No, Oguizi," said Regundo; "I never touch buffalo meat when it is before me, for it is 'roondah' [a forbidden thing]. In the days of old, one of my ancestresses gave birth to a buffalo, and since that time it is 'roondah' to all the people that belong to our camp to eat of the buffalo. A vessel in which buffalo has been cooked is never used by our clan. I can eat all other animals."

Then the ouganga, or medicine-man, exclaimed: "The wild boar is 'roondah' to me and to my clan;" and as I was on the point of putting a piece of hippopotamus on the leaf of Oshoria, the latter said: "No, no, Oguizi. I never eat hippopotamus meat. It is

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‘roondah’ to me, because in the days of old one of my clan gave birth to a hippopotamus.”

I laughed so much after he said this, shouting, “Never did a human being give birth to a hippopotamus!” that Oshoria said, very seriously: “I speak the truth, Oguizi, believe me.”

Every man had a “roondah,” and never used the vessel in which his forbidden meat had been cooked.

We all had voracious appetites. Big pieces of meat disappeared fast one after another. The men did not seem to take time to chew their food—they took such big mouthfuls. I did not wonder at the size of the pieces they seemed to swallow, for the mouths of most of them, when they laughed almost spread from ear to ear.

Once in a while they would look suspiciously towards the Waterbury clock. They could not get accustomed to it, for it was in their eyes a supernatural thing that was always talking. As to myself, to show them that I had no “roondah,” I tasted of every dish, but ate most of the monkey, for its meat was fat and juicy, and tasted very good.

The dogs surrounded us, and with expectant look were waiting for a bone, and as soon as one got a bone he disappeared to eat it alone.

After every dish had been cleared of its contents I

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got up from my seat and said: "Slaves of King Mombo, and you belonging to other masters, the Oguizi loves you all."

Thereupon all shouted at the same time: "We love you also, for you are good, Oguizi. Stay with us all the time."

At these words Regundo rose and said: "You will not be hungry, Oguizi, while you are with us. The hunters will go and hunt with you; there is plenty of game in the forest—plenty of plantain trees and manioc in the ground."

"Yes," shouted all the hunters, "we will go and hunt and kill game for you. Stay with us, good Oguizi."

At this I got up, telling them not to go away, went into my house, and came out with some beads, looking-glasses, files, fire-steel, flints and powder, and distributed these among them, giving to the women beads and looking-glasses, and to the men the rest. Great excitement ensued. They shouted: "We can die for you, Oguizi, for we love you." Then in a quieter manner they added: "Every evening after our day's work is over we will come and talk to you, for it does us good to see you."

In the evening the slaves came with strange-looking musical instruments. I was to be present at an

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African concert. The first musician played on a "handja." How queer the instrument looked! It consisted of a frame about three feet and a half long, and two feet broad, in which were set some ten or twelve hollow gourds covered by thin strips of hardwood. These gourds and the strips of wood were of different sizes and so graduated that they formed a regular series of notes. The tone was clear and good.

When the player had finished his piece, another got up and played upon a kind of harp, covered with the skin of a gazelle, and sang at the same time.

Then another man took his place and played on what we might call a small guitar, covered with a snake skin, singing at the same time. The strings of these instruments were of vegetable fibre.

Ten men then came on with their tomtoms, which varied in size and length according to the fashions of the tribes to which they belonged. The cylinder of the longest was about six feet in length, of the shortest about four feet. The wood was hollowed out quite thin, and antelope skin stretched over both ends tightly. The drummers beat furiously on the upper or larger end with two sticks. The more excited the people became, the louder the drummers beat. No music can excite the savage more than



"The first musician played on a 'handja' "





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these tomtoms. The singing became terrific; the women, as well as the men, made the wildest contortions and gesticulations as they danced. By the light of the torches, with the great forest surrounding us, the scene appeared weird and fantastic, as if it did not belong to this world. It was almost morning when the festivities ended.

CHAPTER XV

A TALK WITH KING MOMBO'S SLAVES—WHY SLAVES
DO NOT RUN AWAY—VARIOUS FEATURES OF THE
TRAFFIC—THE CANNIBALS OF THE INTERIOR—
MY DAILY OCCUPATIONS.

AFTER the feast the slaves and I became more friendly than ever. The following evening they all came to see me. I told them to fill their pipes and sit down—that I was going to light the pipe of every one with my sticks giving fire. The matches gave them great delight. Some wanted their pipes lighted several times, but I could not afford this great extravagance. I did not want to run short of matches.

We made a big blazing fire and I stood under the little piazza having Regundo, Oshoria, Ngola, Ogoola, Quabi, and the medicine-man by me. I had made friends with the medicine-man by giving him four of my long hairs. The men and women and children formed a group in the shape of a horseshoe.

At first nobody uttered a word, but all looked at me, and I said with a loud voice, so that every one could hear me: "I have wandered in this great forest

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for a long time — can any one here tell me how large it is, and where it ends?" Then all shouted at the same time: "No one amongst us can tell where this forest ends, but we think that it goes as far as the country where the sun rises in the morning."

A queer-looking slave tattooed all over then got up and said: "Oguizi, it is so. Here are slaves that have come from very far countries, but none of them has ever been out of this great forest. There are prairies, but as soon as you get out of them you are once more in the forest. Those prairies are like the islands, found in the rivers. When you leave them there is water all round; when we leave the prairie there is the forest all round."

Next another slave rose and said: "Oguizi, I had to walk many months in the forest before I came here. I was sold from tribe to tribe, and I had to follow many of the paths. Sometimes I journeyed by rivers, at other times by land. Once I was given with four other men as payment for canoes. At another time I was sold for some salt — and still another, I was exchanged for a tusk of ivory. It took me five rainy seasons [years] on the way before I came here to belong to King Mombo. I thought all the time I was travelling that I was coming to the country where the sun set. King Mombo took me to see the big

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water [the sea]. I was much frightened when I saw the big waves strike the land. I made sure they would break the land and engulf me, but what frightened me more was to see the sun disappear under the water. Then it became dark. In my country we had never heard of the sea."

I asked him where then he thought the rivers were going to; and he replied: "Our people thought they became smaller and smaller as they ran down and that they finally disappeared in the earth."

Another slave who then rose said: "I was sold on account of witchcraft. The people of my tribe thought I was a sorcerer. I was not, but they sold me, and before I came here, I passed through many tribes. I am so glad I am here, for I am contented. My only fear is that perhaps one of these days King Mombo will sell me. He has been kind to me, for he has given me a nice wife, and I have fine children, and I am happy to know that my children cannot be sold, for the children of us slaves are free. They are called 'bambais.' That is the name the free people give us,—and the 'bambais' remain under their protection, and have to fight with the men to whom their parents belonged; they belong to his clan and tribe, but if King Mombo dies before we do, his slaves will be divided among his brothers,

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and if his brothers are dead, among nephews or the nearest of kin."

He pointed out to me his wife and children, and had them come and sit by me.

"When you are on the way from one tribe to another, don't you sometimes have chances to escape?" I asked.

"What is the use of trying to escape?" they replied. "Some men, it is true, are foolish enough to try. But when you run away from your tribe or from your master, you have no friends. Every man is against you. When you have a master, he is like your father; he takes your part. A slave that runs away is sure to be captured and be made a slave again. Sometimes, when they think they are to be killed, they run away to save their lives."

One of the slaves then rose and said: "Oguizi, I do not come from a far country, — only four tribes inland from here, — but I was sold by my parents."

"What?" said I. "Sold by your parents?"

"It is so, Oguizi. Not only in my tribe, but in many other tribes, parents sell their children."

"It is so, Oguizi," all shouted with one voice. "Yo, yo, yo, it is so."

Then the slave continued: "When we are small and helpless, our parents love us, and would not

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part from us, but as we grow to be big boys and can help ourselves, they often sell us. This is the custom among many tribes."

"Do they sell their daughters also?" I asked.

"Yes, they do, but not as often as they do their sons, because when they give their daughters in marriage, the suitor has to give them one or more slaves for her. The more daughters they have, the richer they become. A man has to give several slaves in order to marry the daughter of a chief."

Then another slave got up and said: "I was given away in that way. My old master married one of King Mombo's daughters, and I was given to the king with three other slaves, as payment, before he could take her away. Oguizi, when people want to sell their children or grown people, they find plenty of excuses. The best of all is that you are a sorcerer, or a witch; people would rather be sold as slaves than be killed as sorcerers. But people cannot hold slaves of their own tribe, their slaves must always belong to some other tribe."

"What do people buy slaves with?" I asked.

"With guns, brass kettles, copper rods, iron bars, beads, and other things. Far inland, sometimes a man is sold for salt."

At these words, a slave got up and said: "I was

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sold for salt and nothing else. My family wanted to get rid of me."

After this, Regundo himself rose and said: "King Mombo is very good to us all. He has given to each of us a wife, and when a man has no wife, he buys one for him, and if one of our women has no husband, he buys a man for her. He loves me, for I was given to him when a child as part payment by my former master who married his daughter. He had to give four more slaves to him before he took her to his village.

"Our wives attend to the cultivation of the soil, go fishing, and smoke the fish. They prepare food for our master. We men cut down the trees and burn them, for you see there are no open spaces in the forest. Cutting down trees is very hard work. Only our wives cultivate the soil. Plantain trees and manioc are only planted once in the same spot. Often the wives of King Mombo come here. They also cultivate the soil."

One old slave said: "Very few of us like to go to King Mombo, for fear that if somebody should die while we are there we might be accused of witchcraft, and our master might take it into his head to kill us without trial, or to sell us. But our master always takes the part of the slaves he loves and insists that

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they shall be tried by the poison ordeal, the 'mboundou,' the same as if they were freemen."

Then they all looked at the moon and thought it was time to go to bed, and said good night. When they left I said to them, "Come again to-morrow evening," to which they replied, "We will come."

The following evening the slaves came again and seated themselves on the ground. They said never a word, but kept gazing at me and looking at the Waterbury clock by turns.

Then I said to them: "Friends of mine, yesterday we talked about the big forest and about yourselves. Now tell me all about the people who live in the great forest."

A big fellow, tall and slender, rose. He was tattooed all over and had teeth that were filed sharp to a point. It was believed by all that he had come from the furthest part of the interior of the continent. After a deep silence he said: "There are many tribes of men in the forests, Oguizi. Some are fierce and warlike. There are also tribes of men that are cannibals, who eat human flesh. These are the fiercest of all. They are always fighting, and they eat many of the prisoners they capture, for they prefer eating to selling them. They are great, powerful men. Their villages are fenced outside with long poles, and on the top of many



*"A big fellow, tall and slender, rose. He was
tattooed all over"*



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poles are seen human skulls and skulls of wild beasts. They have many powerful idols and are great witchcraft men. They are great smiths, and make many terrible implements of war. Their spears are barbed. They carry crossbows and use poisoned arrows; they have also many terrible-looking axes of strange shape, which they can throw through the air and with the sharp edge split in two the skulls of their enemies. Their shields are square and are often made of the skin of the elephant; they are as hard as iron.

"A cannibal bought me. He belonged to the Osheba tribe. I was dreadfully afraid that I should be eaten up, but a few days afterwards he sold me for some pieces of copper and beads to a man who belonged to a neighboring tribe that was not cannibal."

"Do you know by what name those cannibal tribes are called?" I asked.

"I know the names of two of them," he replied. "One is called Fan, the other Osheba."

"We have an Osheba man and woman amongst us, also a Fan and his wife," they all shouted at once. Regundo told these two couples to get up and come before me. I looked at them. The men were fierce-looking fellows and as fine negroes as I had ever seen. They were very tall, over six feet in height, and their skin was of the color of chocolate. Their front teeth

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were filed to a fine point and colored black. The mouths of these two cannibals looked horrid when they laughed. Each wore a long queue of hair hanging down his back. They wore round their ankles two large, heavy iron rings. Their bodies were tattooed. They had been owned by King Mombo for over twelve years, and were amongst his bravest warriors. When they went out to fight they would not use guns, but armed themselves with barbed spears which they made themselves, turning the iron into steel by forging it in charcoal. Their shields were made of the hide of an elephant that they had trapped in a pit.

I asked them where they came from, and they said that their village was situated on the shores of a big river, that they had been sold for two brass kettles, and had come to King Mombo all the way by water, being bartered from one tribe to another, each tribe giving more and more goods for them as they came down the river, the price of slaves increasing always as they come nearer the sea.

Here an Ishogo slave got up, and said: "Oguizi, the strangest people who live in the forest are the Obongos, a race of pigmies. They never grow tall, never plant anything like other men, and live only on fruits, berries, and nuts. They wander continually in

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the forest in search of these, and do not even live one moon [month] at the same place.

“They have little villages, but their houses are not like ours, they are so small” — and, raising his hands to a certain height, I understood that the houses of the pigmies were not more than three feet in height, and the doors or openings of these through which they go inside were not more than twelve or fifteen inches from the ground.

“How can that be?” I said. “Then the Obongos must be scarcely more than a foot in height.”

“They are taller than that,” the Ishogo replied, “but when they enter their houses they lie flat on their stomachs and creep like snakes, or bend very low.” Then, making a gesture with his hands, he gave me to understand that they were between three feet and a half and four feet tall.

Then an Apinji and an Oshango slave rose and testified to the truth of the narrative and the Apinji said: “These little people are called Ashoongas by us.”

“Who amongst all the tribes are the best fighters?” I inquired.

“The cannibals first,” they all shouted — “then the Bakolai, then the Shekianis.”

“Do all the tribes when they make war kill only warriors?”

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"No," they replied; "they kill old men, women, and children also."

It was getting late, and time for them to disperse, and as they rose to do so they gave a last suspicious glance at the Waterbury clock.

The mode of life I led on the plantation was the same every day. I got up before sunrise and bathed in a little stream of clear water running in the forest at a short distance from my little cabin. By that time Regundo's wife had my breakfast ready. The meal varied according to the game on hand—but I always had plantain. Immediately after this early breakfast, generally about 6.30 A. M., I started for the forest.

Some days I went for birds, others for butterflies and other insects, and once in a while for big game. I generally returned towards noon, then had another meal—after which I went into the shade of trees and stuffed the birds I had killed. I often went again into the forest in the afternoon. I had a very busy life, and very little time to feel lonely. Every morning when I awoke I was filled with the hope of discovering some new animals or birds. When I had time to spare I studied the habits of the people, and their ways of thinking. Still, though I was much occupied,



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I often thought of my friends, and at times was homesick enough.

Part of my time was also spent in learning from different slaves the languages of their tribe, so that I might be able to speak to people during my wanderings. None, of course, had a written language. So I had to write the words, with my pencil, on paper. I made a sort of dictionary, writing the words as I understood the people to pronounce them. There were many dialects, belonging, no doubt, to a single language in former times. They had not many words, as their needs were few, but all these languages had grammatical forms, handed down from one generation to another.

CHAPTER XVI

THE ANIMALS OF THE FOREST — FIVE KINDS OF APES —
THE NGINA OR GORILLA — HIS GREAT STRENGTH
AND FIERCENESS — HOW HE ATTACKS MAN AND
OTHER ANIMALS — OSHORIA'S ACCOUNT OF HIM.

THE slaves assembled the next evening. I said to them: "Yesterday I heard about the people living in the big forest. Now tell me of the strange beasts that roam amongst the trees."

Regundo replied: "Oguizi, there are many strange creatures living in the forest. Some of them resemble people. We call them men and women of the woods, for they have no tails and have faces like human beings. There are five kinds of them, nginas [gorillas], nshiego-mbouvés, nshiego-kengos, nshiegos, and kooloo-kambas. The ngina is the blackest of all. Some of the nshiegos have faces almost of the same color as yours, Oguizi.

"The one amongst these we dread more than all the others is the ngina, for he is very fierce and has the strength of many men. So we call him the 'giant of the forest.' There is the skull of a 'man' ngina on the top of my house. Look at it. I killed the

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creature several years ago, when I was younger. By its side is the skull of his mate."

I looked up and in the moonlight I saw a strange-looking head with a crest on the top and powerful teeth. Its jaws had apparently more power than those of a lion.

Regundo got up, went into his house and, coming back with a gun, said: "Oguizi, this gun has killed several nginas, many elephants. The 'mondah' [charm] attached to it is very powerful. It has brought me good luck in hunting and is the cause of my always having killed the animals I shot, no matter how strong or how fierce they were."

Then Oshoria rose and said: "When a hunter comes before a big adult man ngina, he feels that he must kill the ngina or be killed by him. It is sure to be one or the other." Then after a short pause he continued: "Strange to say, the ngina has the same number of bones that we have. The babies have twenty teeth like our children; later they have twenty-eight. Then they get four more and have thirty-two teeth, like adult human beings.

"The ngina lives in the dense and most solitary parts of the forest; it is a restless creature, wandering from place to place in search of food. They never kill animals to eat them, for they feed only on berries,

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nuts, and fruits of the forest, and on the sugar-cane, plantains, and bananas, which they steal from our plantations, thus causing us often to go hungry. A full grown ngina can easily eat twenty or thirty bunches of green plantains or bananas a day, many scores of pine-apples, and big heaps of berries, nuts, and fruits. They eat all the time, from morning until dark. So they have to roam about in search of food, unless they discover a field of plantain trees bearing fruit; then they remain near the place until they have eaten up everything.

"A man ngina is so strong that no number of men can ever capture him. He would tear to pieces those attacking him. He can bend the barrel of a gun, and break trees, or branches of trees, that are much bigger than his thighs just as if they were reeds."

"Tell me, Oshoria," said I, "how nginas attack the hunters that pursue them."

Oshoria replied: "If the man ngina is with his mate, the latter always runs away, giving a shrill cry of alarm. Then the man ngina gets up on his hind legs, standing like a man, and looks around to see where his enemy is. Then he gives yell after yell, roar after roar, until the whole forest is filled with the din of his big voice. Then he comes

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forward to attack, walking erect, and roaring all the time. Sometimes the yell resembles that of an angry dog, though a hundred times louder. His big vindictive gray eyes look his antagonist straight in the face, glaring vengeance, and meaning death. The hair on the top of his head moves up and down, and the hair on his body stands erect. Then he beats his chest with his huge and powerful hands. They have such big hands, Oguizi, and these are so powerful, that when they strike a man they almost cut him in two. Once I killed a big ngina, who had one arm shorter than the other, for it had been broken, probably by the blow of another ngina fighting him, but, strange to say, the arm had knitted together of itself.

"It takes a stout heart to face the monster when he comes to the attack. It is of no use to try to run away, for a ngina runs faster than a man. When he looks at his enemy he seems to say to him, 'I am going to kill you. You are soon to die. How do you dare to come and disturb me in my solitude.' His wrinkled black face is terrible to look at, and every time he roars, he shows his powerful teeth, which can crush the arm of a man in an instant."

"Do they fight with their teeth," I inquired.

"No," he replied, "their great weapons are their

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big, long muscular arms, and their hands, their legs, and their feet, but especially their arms. When they have disabled or seized their antagonists, they often in their rage give a bite or two, but one way or the other it is all over with a man when he is in the clutches of the ngina. Oguizi, the huge creature has nails like those of a man."

"How big are the nginas?" I asked.

"They are as tall as men, and vary in size also, but they have such big chests that two grown men put side by side at the back of the ngina could not be seen by a man coming from the opposite direction."

"Where do you aim when you are going to shoot a ngina?"

"In the direction of the heart. When shot there he dies instantly, and, like men who are shot through the heart, he falls forward. Then comes a great sight. He groans, the long arms stretch out. His fingers twitch, his hands open and shut several times, and woe to the man who should find himself in his grip at that time.

"When a ngina roams in the forest where men have only spears or poisoned arrows," continued Oshoria, "he roams undisturbed and at leisure, for no body of warriors, however brave, would dare to attack him. Though he might fall under the weight of many



*“ A little before dark she goes up a tree with the
baby to sleep ”*



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spears, he would succeed in killing many men first. Only guns can kill nginas. The nginas are very suspicious, and when they hear a noise in the forest they move away from it, but when they tire of being tracked they show fight. When old, the man ngina and his mate travel together with the baby. When very old the man of the woods is always alone. There is a great danger when we walk in the forest in coming suddenly upon a man ngina. Then he is sure to attack us, and if a man has no gun he is sure to be killed.

"I wish you could see a 'woman' ngina with her baby. They look like human beings. Just a little before dark she goes up a tree with the baby to sleep. The big fellow sleeps at the foot of the tree to keep watch, and woe to the animal that comes near."

"Tell me, Oshoria," said I, "do leopards attack the ngina?"

"They do sometimes. The leopards move so silently in the forest that the nginas cannot hear them approach; then the leopard springs upon the back of the ngina and fastens his teeth into his neck, while his claws are deeply imbedded in his back. Then the combat is soon over, for the neck of the ngina is torn to pieces, and he succumbs. But woe to the leopard if the ngina can seize him with his powerful hands.

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“ When a ngina sees a leopard on the ground, he runs towards a tree, and, setting his back against the trunk, stands in an erect posture, or seats himself. There he feels strong, and can withstand the attack of the leopard. He watches with deep, gray, sunken eyes every movement of his antagonist, trying to scare him with his yells and roars. We believe that if a leopard is bold enough to spring upon a ngina when he has his back against a tree, the ngina often succeeds in seizing the leopard by his tail as the latter springs. Then he swings the animal round and round by the tail, striking it at last against a tree, and killing his enemy instantly in that way. At other times, when a ngina succeeds in jumping upon a leopard, he puts one of his powerful hands upon his neck to prevent him from turning his head and biting him, then holding the beast with his feet, which are like hands, he breaks his spine, and tears him to pieces, biting him terribly at the same time. Just look at his teeth ! ” concluded Oshoria, pointing at the same time at the head on the top of the house.

“ Does the ngina attack elephants ? ” I asked.

“ I do not think the ngina attacks elephants, Oguizi. I hope you will see and kill a ngina with ‘ Bulldog ’ while you are with us. There are not many in the forest. ”

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"We *must* see some nginas," I cried.

"You will meet some," shouted the hunter in response.

When Oshoria had finished his narrative the perspiration was fairly running down his face, he had become so excited. I did not wonder, for he remembered how the huge beasts had attacked him, and he fancied that the animal was before him and that he heard his fearful yells and tremendous roars.

I said to him : " Now fill your pipe, and I will light it with my fire-stick." After he had rested a while I said to him : " Do nginas build houses, or any shelter whatever ? "

" No," he replied, " and if any one says that he has seen a shelter built by a ngina, he lies."

By this time it had grown late and soon all the slaves left after bidding me good night.

CHAPTER XVII

THE OTHER APES OF THE GREAT FOREST — OSHORIA TELLS ABOUT THE NSHIEGO MBOUVÉS — CAPTURE OF A BABY "MAN OF THE WOODS" — HIS MOTHER KILLED — CORRESPONDENCE OF THE DIFFERENT APES WITH THE VARIOUS HUMAN RACES.

THE next evening the slaves again made their appearance, and to amuse them I told them again to fill their pipes, and lighted them with my matches, to their great delight. While they were smoking I said: "I heard yesterday about the strong and fierce ngina. Tell me this evening something about the nshiego, nshiego mbouvé, nshiego kengo, and kooloo-kamba. Tell me how you can distinguish the different kinds among these 'men of the woods,' as you call them."

"We easily recognize each kind," replied Oshoria, for he was again to be the spokesman. "I will tell first of the nshiego mbouvé. He is far from being as tall and powerful as the ngina. The nshiego mbouvé is the bald-headed man of the woods — he is born with thin hair on his head, but as he grows older the hair drops off entirely. He is the only one

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amongst the nshiegos that becomes bald. But, Oguizi, the nshiego mbouvé when very young has a face whiter and paler than yours — though his mother and father are as black as the blackest among us. Strange to say, as the baby nshiego mbouvé grows older, his pale face grows darker and darker, and after a time comes to be as black as that of his father and mother.

“ But, Oguizi,” added Oshoria, with emphasis, “ they are so shy that it is very difficult to approach them. The best way is to discover their shelter and lie in wait for them.”

After a pause, he said: “ The nshiego kengo is born pale yellow, and has a pale face also ; the blood does not go through its skin, as your blood does through yours ; no matter how warm they are, how much they have run, they always remain pale. The nshiego mbouvé and the nshiego kengo are more intelligent than the ngina. They make a shelter for themselves on trees, about five or six arms' lengths from the ground. There they rest at night, as they are afraid of the leopards. The ‘ man ’ has one shelter, the ‘ woman ’ another, on two different trees close together. They do not attack men, and run away at the least noise.

“ Then comes the kooloo-kamba, another kind of

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nshiego. This kind is very rare. He is different from the nshiego mbouvé and nshiego kengo. He is born black. We call him kooloo-kamba because his cry is 'kooloo-kooloo.'

"Then comes the last of the men of the woods, and the most numerous species. He goes by the name of nshiego. He is born pale-faced and gradually becomes black. He also is very intelligent. We can tame easily all the species of young nshiegos, and we capture them by killing their mothers when we find them together.

"The reason we call all this kind of 'men of the woods' 'nshiego' is because they are much alike in some respects: they all have elongated hands with long fingers, and long and narrow feet. All nshiegos have big ears, too, while the ngina has very small ears and much shorter hands and feet. All the nginas and the nshiegos are tailless; they have a spine, like man. The nshiegos spend much of their time on trees; they are great tree-climbers — that is the reason that they have long hands and fingers. With these they readily seize the branches of trees; their feet are also on that account more flexible than those of the ngina."

When Oshoria had done speaking about all the "men of the woods" found in this great African forest,

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I thought of the strange orang-outangs, which I had seen alive at home in New York and Boston, and how wonderfully human they looked, with their high foreheads. These also live in big forests in the islands of Borneo and Sumatra. They are another kind of "men of the woods," without tails. "How strange it is," I said to myself, "that amongst the 'men of the woods,' there are three colors, as with human beings. The orang-outang has hair that is brown and a face of almost the same color, and corresponds to the brown races. The nshiego kengo has somewhat the color of the white man, and the ngina and the kooloo-kamba have that of the black man."

Two days after our conversation about the nshiegos I heard a great uproar near Regundo's house, just as I was emerging from the forest after my morning's hunting. I saw a big crowd of slaves, and heard loud exclamations of astonishment, and the words "nshiego mbouvé" and "baby nshiego mbouvé." I hurried up and saw Regundo, Oshoria, Ogoola, Ngola, and Quabi coming to meet me. They said: "Oguizi, we have killed a nshiego mbouvé and captured her baby, which is alive and well. Come and see them." Soon after I stood by the side of the dead nshiego mbouvé, which was perfectly black, and looked with wonder at the very white face of the baby nshiego mbouvé. I

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thought I had never seen amongst wild creatures such a human face as I did in that little old face of the baby ; he looked so pale that one might have thought he had just left a sick bed or the hospital. He crept over the body of his mother and moaned, " Whoe, whoe," as if he were a human being. It was his mode of crying. He knew that his mother was dead.

In the evening Oshoria and the slaves assembled and we talked about nshiego mbouvés and the other "men of the woods." Pointing to the little nshiego mbouvé fast asleep on a bed of dry leaves, Oshoria said: "The pale-faced nshiego mbouvé and the other 'men of the woods' have in many respects better luck than we poor black men have. They have not to work hard as we do, they have not to dig the ground, to cut down the trees of the forest, to sow or to plant, in order to live. If we did not do this we should die of hunger. Food grows of itself for them in the forest ; they can always find something to eat. It is true that there is the race of pigmies, who are human beings like us and live chiefly, like the 'men of the woods,' on the nuts, berries, and fruits of the forest and do not plant or sow anything, but then the pigmies can trap game and exchange it with the big people for plantains. They know the use of fire and cook their food.

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“These ‘men of the woods’ do not have to go into the forest and collect firewood; they do not have to carry big loads on their backs; they do not have to cook food. There are a number of things we can do and they cannot. They cannot make fire. They cannot make intoxicating drinks and get drunk. They cannot smoke. They have no idols, no ‘mondahs,’ no witchcraft. They do not sell each other into slavery. They do not beat their mates, as we do our wives.

“These ‘men of the woods’ look so much like human beings that there are tribes of men who do not eat them, for to them it would seem like eating people. But there are many tribes who eat them, just as there are tribes of men who eat people as they eat game.

“The monkeys,” he continued, “are the relations of the ‘men of the woods.’ What human faces they have! When they are travelling in the woods, they have their leaders and follow them. They all understand each other. When we walk in the forest, they look down upon us as if they were human beings. When we shoot and kill them with our bows and arrows, they look at us with their dying eyes as if to say: ‘Why did you hurt me? Have I ever done you any harm?’ But how angry they look when in captivity if we do something that does not please them. Strange to say, Oguizi, we can trap monkeys, but can never trap the

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‘men of the woods.’ I do not know that a ‘man of the woods’ has ever been caught in a trap.

“Oguizi, do you remember this morning, how the baby nshiego mbouvé moaned after his mother, — how he walked over her dead body ; he knew that she was dead.

“There is a great difference between the baby human being and the baby of a nshiego mbouvé and of the other ‘men of the woods.’ Almost as soon as a baby of the ‘men of the woods’ is born, his fingers can clutch and cling to his mother. Our babies cannot ; they are helpless.”

It was late when our talk ended. The slaves rose and bade me good-night. The dear slaves were my only companions.

CHAPTER XVIII

ANGOOKA, THE MEDICINE MAN — HIS STRANGE APPEARANCE — EAVESDROPPING — I OVERHEAR THE CONVERSATION OF THE SLAVES — THEY TALK AMONG THEMSELVES ABOUT THE OGUIZI.

EARLY the next morning all the slaves on the plantation gathered near Regundo's house, for I had gone hunting by myself, and they thought I was far away. Suddenly I changed my mind and returned. As I approached the village, I heard voices. I approached cautiously, and when I got a glimpse of the talkers I hid myself in order not to be seen.

Angooka was easily recognized, for he was dressed in the garb of the medicine man. He wore a head-dress of gaudy red feathers from the tails of gray parrots. Among these were also eagles' and hawks' feathers. On his neck was a necklace made of the beaks of eagles between which were leopards' claws, while as a pendant hung four leopards' teeth. Round his waist was a belt to which were fastened cowry shells filled with charmed powder. His body was painted all over with white ochre (chalk), over which were scattered

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round yellow spots. Upon each of his cheeks were two flaming red spots. In his hand he held several charmed skins tied together, holding precious and powerful powders.

At a little distance a man was stationed on the top of a slender tree. From there he addressed the medicine man, and asked him questions about Jockoo or Abamboo, shaking the tree at the same time, to which Angooka replied in a sonorous manner. The business of Angooka was to keep away the evil spirits and destroy witchcraft in the plantation. Angooka suddenly danced in the wildest manner, uttered all sorts of incantations, peered into the face of every one as if to divine their thoughts, and then declared that there were no witches or wizards with them. Then the ceremony came to an end. Near Angooka were Oshoria, Ngola, Ogoola, and Quabi. I heard the medicine man say to them: "Great indeed is the Oguizi that we have with us. How strange he looks, with his long, straight black hair. His eyes seem to find out the thoughts of a person. Strange that the Oguizi has come to the country of King Mombo, and to you his slaves."

"Where do you think the Oguizi lives?" asked the men of Angooka, who replied:

"The Oguizi can disappear from our sight when

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he wishes. He has come to see our land, and one of these days he will go and we shall never see him any more. He will rise in the air unseen and go to the moon."

Regundo then said to the medicine doctor: "Last night we heard a rumbling noise in his house, the striking of a hammer upon an anvil, and saw flashes of light inside through the cracks in the walls. We heard the Oguizi's incantations. He was then making the things he gives away. When I went into the house in the morning the anvil and hammer were gone, and no remains of fire were to be seen. How strange is the piece of iron which he holds in his hands, to which our knives hang without dropping! How wonderful are his little sticks from which fire springs! How wonderful are the strange boxes [the Waterbury clock and the musical box] full of spirits that are talking to him."

I did not want them to know that I had been listening to them, and when I finally revealed myself and went toward them, I acted as if I had heard nothing.

CHAPTER XIX

NEWS BROUGHT THAT GORILLAS ARE NEAR BY IN THE FOREST—THE DOGS GOT READY FOR THE HUNT—THEIR NAMES—A GRAND HUNTING COUNCIL—REGUNDO'S WISE ADVICE—CAUTIONS TO BE OBSERVED.

ONE morning just as I shouldered "Bulldog," and was ready to go into the forest, Regundo came to me much excited, and said: "Oguizi, I have great news to tell you. Some men have just arrived with the news that there are nginas in the forest, and near the plantain trees."

"Great news, indeed, you tell me, Regundo," I replied, "and we must get ready to go and attack them. Send for Oshoria, Ngola, Ogoola, and Quabi."

"Yes," said Regundo, "for they are your hunters, and wherever you go they must follow you."

Soon my four hunters were on hand; they had also received the news about the nginas and came to tell us of what they had heard. There was great excitement among the people.

While we were sitting together Regundo said thoughtfully: "If the nginas were only contented

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to eat two or three big bunches of plantains or bananas, and then go away, it would not be so bad. But they pull the trees down, give two or three bites to a bunch, leave the rest, then go to another tree and do likewise, so that in a short time they have plucked twenty or thirty bunches. When tired of eating they go back into the forest and the following morning they come again and take another meal, return into the forest and late in the afternoon make their appearance again for still another meal, after which they go into the forest to sleep. But the elephants are our worst enemies; when a herd of them go into a plantain field they destroy it utterly, and often cause widespread hunger in the country."

It was agreed that early the following morning Oshoria, Ogoola, Ngola, Quabi, and I should start with the men who had brought the news, and that we should take dogs with us. So we made preparations at once. Towards sunset fourteen of the best hunting-dogs—the fiercest and bravest, which were afraid of no beast—were tied together. Names had been given to them that denoted the qualities they possessed. They were called "Fierce," "Never Sleepy," "The Attacker," "He who never runs away," "The Catcher," "The Never Afraid," "The Pouncer," "The Defier," "The Sly," "The Biter,"

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"The Jumper," "The Runner," "The Watchful," "The Bloody." They were indeed a fierce set of dogs, covered with scars, marks of the wounds they had received from the wild beasts they had attacked. They were all descended from fierce hunting-dogs. They seemed to know that they were to be led out to the fray, for they were all yelping, barking, and jumping about. They were strange-looking animals; small, with short hair, straight ears, twisted tails, and yellow and black in color.

As Regundo looked at them he said: "Oguizi, if you encounter any nginas some of these dogs will not come back; they will be killed in the fight."

To this Oshoria returned: "Perhaps it will be so, perhaps not; for these dogs are very knowing. They know how to retire or advance; their eyes are sharp, and they will watch every motion of the nginas."

In the evening a large idol was set in front of Regundo's house. Women came with lighted torches, the tomtoms were brought out, and soon a dance began, accompanied by wild singing.

Later in the evening, as Regundo, Oshoria, Ngola, Ogoola, Quabi, and I were seated by a bright blazing fire, Regundo broke the silence and said: "Oguizi, when people go hunting, they have to be careful about not getting lost in the great forest. Often hunters

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have to leave the paths or have to walk in small streams for a long time, to get to a path further on. Their eyes have to be very sharp in order not to pass it by. In many places the hunting paths are very difficult to follow as there are hardly any traces of them, or they disappear entirely for a while on account either of the growth of the jungle over them, or of fallen trees. Many of these paths are seldom trodden and have to be followed with the greatest of care. At certain places a number of paths come together or diverge in different directions. In this case it is very important to make no mistake, otherwise one goes entirely out of his way. So when one gets into a path that is almost entirely obliterated, or leaves the hunting path, his eyes must notice everything round him, every peculiar tree, every stream, every rock.

“ But this is not enough, for often when one is lost he fancies that he has seen such and such a tree before, though really he has not. It is necessary therefore to make marks with your knife upon the bark of trees ; to break now and then young boughs of trees on your right and on your left ; to collect big handfuls of leaves and to put them together on the ground ; to cut off branches and lay them across the path. By doing this carefully people do not get lost. By fol-

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lowing these marks one returns to the point whence he started. One can never be too careful, for it is very dangerous to be lost in the great forest. If you have been bewitched you may die of starvation, find neither wild honey, berries, nor nuts. Or you may go so far out of your way that you come to a land inhabited by another tribe than yours and then you are captured and made a slave. Once lost it is very difficult to get back to your starting-point. You turn round and round without knowing it. Once I was lost, and when evening came I found myself by the same big tree I had left in the morning."

Here Regundo took a long breath and lighted his pipe, which had gone out while he was speaking.

Then he resumed: "Hunters must be very careful in the handling of their guns; for the forest is full of creepers and vines of all kinds. Branches continually get in the way, and any of these may catch the trigger, and the gun go off. Never have the muzzle of your guns pointed towards your body or in the direction of your neighbor."

"You are right, Regundo." I exclaimed. "Besides one man must never point his gun at another, even though he calls it playing. It is a very bad sort of playing. People are often killed in that manner. Then the man who was playing with his gun, says

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that he thought it was not loaded. A man who points his gun towards another man ought to be punished."

"Yes, he ought," shouted the hunters with one voice. "We hunters never play in that way with our guns."

Then came another pause, after which Regundo continued: "A man who has not a cool head must never be a hunter. In the presence of a dangerous beast he is lost himself if he loses his head, for he cannot shoot straight. A cool head is very necessary in the presence of an elephant, a ngina, a buffalo, or a leopard, especially if you come suddenly upon them, or when they attack or charge you."

At the end of these words of wisdom from Regundo, all shouted: "That is so, that is so."

"Yes," I said, "no man is a good hunter unless he has a cool head; otherwise he is sure to be killed."

After this little interruption Regundo continued: "Hunters have to be particularly careful when they hunt elephants, especially a bull or 'rogue elephant,' for these often charge even when the bullet is sure to cause their death afterwards. The best thing that can happen is to kill them on the spot, then there is no danger ahead. A man must be particularly cool-headed when an elephant charges. He must stand

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perfectly still, looking at the beast when he comes towards him and must know exactly the time to move, and then retreat three steps, if he is not protected by a tree, just in time for the elephant to pass before him. Elephants cannot make a sudden sharp turn or stop at once when they charge. They go straight ahead and they do not return to charge the enemy a second time. One must be exceedingly careful not to approach the elephant, though he appears to be dead, for sometimes he gets up suddenly and charges, and if the hunter has not a clear field, or is encumbered by creepers or trees and cannot step backward, then the elephant will impale him, trample upon his body, or kill him with his trunk."

"Yes, yes, that is surely so," shouted the hunters. "Mbango was killed in that manner, two dry seasons ago. We found him dead, the elephant having trampled upon him. One of his feet had been entangled in a creeper, and he could not step backward in time."

Regundo finished his speech by saying: "Hunters must always be very careful in shooting, so that the bullet does not hit on its way some young tree or creeper, for then the bullet not only loses its force, but deviates from its course. But," he added thoughtfully, "all precautions are useless if witchcraft comes



“ Sometimes he suddenly gets up and charges ”





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in, for misfortune follows the man who has been bewitched."

As the men got up they invoked Mombo and Olombo to give them good luck. "You know that we love you, that every time we kill game we give you some," they shouted. Then we bade each other good-night.

CHAPTER XX

WE START AFTER THE GORILLAS — CAUTIOUS WALKING THROUGH THE FOREST — THE DOGS FIND THE NGINA — YELLS OF THE MONSTER BROUGHT TO BAY — HE SLAUGHTERS TWO OF THE DOGS — TAUNTS OF THE HUNTERS — SHOT THROUGH THE HEART AT LAST.

EARLY in the morning, just at dawn of day, I was ready for the start. Soon Oshoria, Ogoola, Ngola, and Quabi made their appearance. What a sight they were! Their bodies were daubed all over with ochre of different colors, a sign that they were on the war-path. Each wore a broad belt of charmed leopard skin over which incantations from the medicine doctor had been made the day before, and which were thereupon pronounced by him invulnerable against spears, arrows, and bullets. They were all covered with "mondahs," which also had been made powerful by incantations and were to protect their lives. They would never have started for the hunt without these.

These charms were made of skins of rare animals which enclosed the dried flesh and brains of rare monkeys and birds, teeth of crocodiles and leopards,

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feathers of birds, fangs and brains of snakes, ashes of animals' intestines that had been burned by the medicine doctor, and rare and precious land shells, filled with charmed ingredients.

Oshoria wore a charmed iron chain which had been forged in a far country. This chain was looked upon by all the slaves as the most invincible of all charms, for Oshoria had met many dangerous and ferocious beasts, he had killed several nginas, and had never been wounded. This chain ran from his left shoulder to his right side.

The men had left that morning in the forest an offering of a leg of an antelope to the spirits Olombo and Mombo to propitiate their good will, so that they should give them good luck.

Before starting, my hunters cut the backs of their hands in several places before one of the idols, and mixed their blood with earth and some kind of dust and clay, with which each filled a land shell, carried by every man in a bag, that also contained a special little idol, to guard and protect them from harm.

They neglected nothing to insure their lives. Regundo invoked the spirits of his ancestors in a loud voice and called upon them to follow us and protect us.

When everything was ready we went to the canoes

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that were waiting for us. Into one we put the dogs, Ogoola and Ngola going with them; Oshoria and Quabi, and the two men who had brought us news of the presence of the nginas and were to act as our guides were in my canoe. Regundo followed us to the river and, taking my hands, blew on them and wished me success.

We paddled along until we came to a tree under which the spirit called Mbuiiri was supposed to rest sometimes and look at the river. The men danced and sang under it.

Then we continued our way upon the silent river — lined all along with the dense forest. We saw two huge black and yellow snakes in the water. Afterwards we met a troop of monkeys which from a tree were looking towards the other side of the river. They were chattering among themselves in great earnest. They wanted, I thought, to cross to the other side — but the river was too wide. When we came near them they stopped chattering, and looked down upon us as we passed. When far enough away we heard them chattering again.

Further up we landed near a large tree, where I saw a path. We partook of a light meal, and then, making our canoes secure among the reeds that hid them from sight, we started. This path led to the plantation of

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the two men who had brought the news of the nginas. The dogs were led by leashes, for we did not want them to run in the forest.

As we marched in single file, not one of us spoke a word. Two or three times we heard troops of monkeys travelling in the forest. Once we heard the shrill cries of a flock of parrots. Suddenly we came upon a great number of pineapple plants; many of the pineapples had been eaten up. Oshoria looked at me and said: "Nginas have been here, — not to-day, but two or three days ago."

We continued our way and discovered in a muddy part of the path four footprints of nginas. Their heel-prints were deep in the mud — but the toe-prints were hardly visible. Two of the heels were much larger than the other two. "The big footprints are those of a man ngina," said Oshoria; "the smaller ones are those of his wife." When looking round I saw two tiny footprints and pointed them out to Oshoria who said: "Those are the footprints of the baby ngina."

Further on we saw along the path a place where the nginas had tarried, for the jungle was much broken, and some of the saplings had been broken and partly chewed or eaten up. This looked as if it had been done the day before. We all agreed that the nginas were in the neighborhood.

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We slept in the forest that night. Before daylight we were up. I painted my face and hands black with powdered charcoal mixed with oil so that I might not be easily seen. Men from the plantation, who had come to meet us, took charge of the dogs.

After two hours' walk we stopped, and one of the guides said something to Oshoria in a very low voice which I could not hear. Then Oshoria said: "We had better loose the dogs and let them go." In the twinkling of an eye they were in the forest and out of sight.

We entered a large field of plantain trees. Oshoria led, I followed, then came Ngolo, Ogoola, and then Quabi. We walked very silently, and our excitement was so great that we could hear each other pant. After a while Oshoria was quite a distance ahead of all of us. He was the scout, and we had lost sight of him through the crookedness of the path. I stopped to see if we were all at hand and then we continued our way, when, after passing a bend in the path, I saw Oshoria standing still waiting for us. As soon as he saw us he gave the cluck of danger, "Kluk, kluk," put his hand on his mouth as a sign not to speak, then his hand towards his ear as a sign for us to listen. We walked towards him without uttering a word, but looked towards each other. Then Oshoria pointed with his

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finger in a certain direction. He had evidently heard something that had attracted his attention there.

Soon we heard the peculiar shrill piercing cry of fear of a ngina. Oshoria whispered to me: "That is the cry of a female gorilla who is afraid and has fled. Probably she has scented the dogs and given the cry of distrust and fear to her mate."

Immediately after we heard the barking of our dogs, followed by the tremendous yells of defiance and fight of a huge male gorilla "Whoah, whoah;" then roars that filled the forest with their din, and seemed to be like the sound of thunder along the sky. These roars almost entirely drowned the fierce barking of the fourteen dogs. "It is a man ngina," whispered Oshoria. "His mate has fled. Let us prepare ourselves for a fight." Instinctively we came still nearer together and looked at our guns; my hunters' guns were loaded with plugs of iron, plugs which they use to kill elephants. I looked at "Bulldog" and said: "Thou faithful rifle, which hast never failed me before in time of danger, be true to me to-day, be true to me!"

"Let us go and fight this man ngina," shouted my men with eagerness in their eyes and a sort of ferocious joy. This time they were not afraid of being heard, for they knew that the huge beast was

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brought to bay and would not run away, but attack. We advanced through the plantain trees, many of which had been pulled down by the two nginas. Every step forward increased the terrific din made by the fierce barking of the dogs and the angry roars of the ngina. We came nearer and nearer the border of the forest, and soon caught sight of the dogs. Looking in the direction where the most forward and daring of them were barking, we saw a huge male gorilla with his back against a tree and following with his eyes the dogs that surrounded him. Evidently the huge fiendish creature had never been attacked by dogs before. He was bewildered by their number and did not know what to do except to yell and roar at them. He was seated, ready to use his powerful long arms or his feet, catching the dogs with his terrible manlike hands if they came near him. The dogs knew this and were cautious in their attack; they advanced and retreated, led by "Bloodthirsty" and "Pouncer," closely followed by the others.

Suddenly the gorilla's yells and roars stopped. He had seen us, and he did not know what to make of these new enemies. His eyes glanced from the dogs to us — he seemed to know that if he went after one of the dogs the others would fall on him from everywhere.

What a sight! The huge creature seemed the incar-

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nation of ugliness. "No other creature in the world can look so ugly," I said to myself. His legs were short and bent, he had such a broad chest and such a protruding abdomen, that it appeared to contain at least a barrel of the food he had devoured. He had big, powerful, muscular long arms, and huge paws, of which the fingers were short and thick. His huge foot had four toes and one thumb. His body was thinly covered with hair, his face was intensely black — blue black — his eyes were deeply sunken in his head, and he looked straight at us, as if he were a human being. Tigers, lions, dogs, and other animals never can look in that way. The sockets of his eyes were evidently like those of man, allowing him to look in the same manner. His hair stood erect all over his body owing to his rage — and that on his head moved up and down, and he beat his breast. But in spite of all that he had an anxious expression in his eyes, which were looking all round, for he had never been surrounded by so many enemies before, dogs and men, and this was the reason he had put himself against a tree — so that no dog could attack him from behind — and thus placed he could see all his foes.

Our guns were pointed at him in the direction of his heart, and at the least advance he made towards us we would have fired. The only thing I feared was that

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instead of advancing erect to attack us, he would drop on all fours, being surrounded by so many enemies, and would run towards us in that posture; then it would have been far more difficult to shoot at and wound him mortally. I noticed blood on one of his hands and then I saw at about five or six feet from him the prostrate form of one of the dogs. It was "Fierce." My men saw the dog at the same time — "Fierce" was one of the most intrepid of their dogs. They shouted to the ngina: "You have killed fierce 'Fierce.' We will kill you also." The gorilla became so hard pressed by the dogs that he had no time to yell, for he was too busy looking round for them; he only uttered now and then, when one came too near, a "Whoah wah." The dogs were ready to spring on him as soon as they had an opportunity. They watched their time, but the huge ngina was watching them also; he knew what they were about, and as soon as they came within his reach he would, by a sudden motion of his long arm shoot it forward and try to catch the most daring one that came near him, sometimes using his legs and feet instead. My hunters were cool — but they were on the war-path and had met their enemy. Oshoria, Ngola, Ogoola, Quabi, shouted words of defiance to the gorilla such as — "We are men. Yes, we are men. Come towards us, if you dare. We are



"The big monster . . . seized 'Bloodthirsty' and threw him dead on the ground"



[REDACTED]



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ready for you. We are not afraid of you — though you look at us straight in the face. We laugh at you. How do you dare to yell at the Oguizi. Soon you will hear ‘Bulldog’ talk to you. Our guns will talk to you also. Ngina, you are a coward — come towards us if you are not afraid. You have only a short time to live; soon you will lie dead at the feet of the Oguizi.”

Then they gave a terrific war-cry, the one used before attacking their enemy, and the gorilla uttered a terrific yell of defiance in response. The dogs had become bolder and bolder, and more and more angry. Suddenly “Bloodthirsty” came too near the ngina, and before he had time to retreat, and quicker than the eye could follow, the big monster had sent his powerful arm forward and with his huge hand seized “Bloodthirsty” and threw him dead on the ground. At this the other dogs, enraged by the loss of their two companions, lost control of themselves — forgot all prudence — and as they were on the point of jumping on the huge beast, which now was uttering terrific yells, I, not wishing the men to lose more dogs, said “Fire!” and we all shot at the same time. The huge monster fell forward on his face, shot through the heart. In the twinkling of an eye the dogs jumped on him and he was torn to pieces.

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Poor "Fierce" and "Bloodthirsty," were dead. Regundo was right when he said that if we met with nginas all the dogs would not return.

Then my hunters went round the ngina, and, looking at him, shouted: "We were not afraid of you. When the Oguizi looked at you, it was just the same as if you were dead, for he had made up his mind to kill you as soon as he saw you."

Then I cut off his head, as a trophy, and, carrying it with us, we went back to the plantation and saw our three guides, who had left us as soon as they thought the nginas were near. We laughed at them.

The following day we were on our way back to my hunters' home. When we reached the plantation, Oshoria carried the head of the gorilla on a pole, Regundo and the other people welcoming us back with great expressions of joy. In the meantime, my clock had stopped, and was silent under the veranda, and Regundo and the other people thought that the spirits that were in it had followed me. Their belief in this increased when they saw that after my return the tick of the clock began again.

CHAPTER XXI

SINGULAR SIGHT IN THE FOREST — ALL KINDS OF ANIMALS FLEEING IN ONE DIRECTION — A TERRIBLE ANT — THE BASHIKOUAY ARMY — ATTACKED EVERYWHERE AT ONCE — HOW I ESCAPED THE TORMENTORS.

A FEW days after my return from the gorilla hunt I found myself one morning all alone. Regundo had gone for the day. The men were cutting trees for a new plantation ; the women were weeding the fields. Feeling somewhat lonely, I left for the forest, armed with a gun. I became so interested on my way in collecting insects and butterflies that the time passed quickly, and before I was aware of it the greater part of the day had gone, and I could not reach the plantation before dark. Knowing this I decided to remain and camp in the forest, for it was impossible to follow the path in the darkness. I had no torch with me, and a leopard might pounce upon me while on my way. So I lighted a fire, collected large leaves, built my camp, and gathered a lot of dead wood, for I intended to surround myself by four fires during the night to make sure that no wild beasts or

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snakes should come near me. I slept well, waking two or three times during the night to attend to the fires. The following morning I determined to go a little further before I retraced my steps towards the plantation.

After a while I noticed a number of snakes which seemed to follow each other in rapid succession, creeping as fast as they could, and all going in the same direction. Two or three of these passed close to me.

Suddenly I heard the tramping of elephants through the jungles breaking down everything before them, and apparently running as fast as they could. One of them crossed the path in sight of me. They were going in the same direction as the snakes.

These were followed by a number of gazelles, antelopes and wild boars. The forest seemed alive with beasts. These went also in the same direction that the snakes and elephants had gone.

I stood still for a moment, for I had never seen such a sight before, when to my utter astonishment a leopard passed near by, bounding and running as fast as it could in the direction of the other animals. "What is the cause of this leopard leaving his lair during the day time, for they generally sleep during the day?" I asked myself. A strange feeling of fear and awe came over me. I thought that some great convulsion of nature was about to take place. The earth was per-

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haps to open, and a volcano burst out at the spot where I stood. An involuntary dread that something grave was to happen came over me. The forest became alive with multitudes of insects and butterflies. They too were fleeing, and in the same direction which the animals had taken before them. A great number of insectivorous birds followed them, preying on them in their flight. In a word, all the living creatures of the forest were in a panic, and were all fleeing in the same direction.

Just as I was about to retrace my steps and run as fast as I could towards the plantation, I found myself suddenly covered with countless ants, which bit me with the greatest ferocity. In an instant they were biting me everywhere, — on my legs, on my arms, on my back, on my neck, they were in my hair. As I ran I tried to kill those that were on my body, those that were outside had their pincers fast in my clothes. They were also everywhere around me, on the ground and on the trees.

These ants were the fierce bashikouays. They were on the war-path, and attacked on their march every leaving creature. Fortunately I could run away in the path faster than they could advance, but I could not get rid of those that were already on me. After about one hour's run I came to a stream, took

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off my watch and put it on the ground, and then lay flat at the bottom of the shallow water, in order that it might cover me entirely, and drown the ants. I did not dare to stay too long in the water, for fear that the bashikouay army would overtake me. Fortunately I succeeded ere long in drowning them, for I did not feel any more bites.

Panting and out of breath I reached the plantation before dark, and I told Regundo about the bashikouays, and how animals and insects had fled at their approach, but did not tell him how I had been bitten by them.

Regundo said: "These ants are called bashikouays, and they were on the war-path."

"What do you mean, Regundo, when you say that the bashikouays were on the war-path?" I asked.

"When they are not on the war-path," he replied, "they walk close together in a line. They are as thick as the grains of dry earth or of sand on the sandy shores of a river; then they are harmless, for they attack no one. But when they scatter, they attack every living thing that comes in their way. They even climb trees, going after insects. Gorillas, elephants, leopards, all living things, flee before them. When they come into our villages or into our houses, we have to protect ourselves, our children, and our babies, by boiling water, fire, and hot ashes."

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Two or three days after my adventure with the bashikouays, Regundo came to me, saying: "Follow me, and you will see the bashikouay ants in marching order; they are harmless, for they are not on the war-path."

I followed him, and soon after he stopped and said: "Here they are," and I saw a moving line of bashikouays crossing the pass, the line being about two inches in width.

CHAPTER XXII

A JOURNEY TO THE ELEPHANT COUNTRY — SERIOUS
ANNOYANCE FROM FLIES, WASPS, AND MOSQUITOES
— IN THE MIDST OF A DROVE OF HIPPOPOTAMI.

I WAS anxious to go on a long hunting expedition. One day when Regundo, Oshoria, Ogoola, Ngola, Quabi, and I were seated under a big tree, I said to them: "We must go and hunt elephants, hippopotami, crocodiles, and other big game." This suggestion was received with sonorous grunts of approbation by them all, and it was agreed that we should prepare ourselves for a long expedition.

The following day I saw Oshoria slyly entering the idol house, and after he had closed the door behind him I approached the house and, peeping through a crack, saw that he was marking his body with ochre of different colors. Then he muttered words to the idol that I could not understand. Afterwards he took from a little wooden box a piece of red ochre and made a mark with it between his eyes, and another mark in the hollow of his chest, and then spoke very fast. Then he went to another box, and took from it a charmed necklace, to which was hung a sort of small

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iron bell, which was filled with charmed powder and which he put around his neck. When I saw that he was ready to come out I retired as quickly as possible.

For three days great preparations were made for our hunting expedition. The wives of the hunters prepared food for us. Dear Regundo invoked every evening the spirits of his ancestors to protect us. The ouganga or medicine doctor, made incantations for our success, and said that we were to be lucky.

We started with two canoes, the people following us to the banks of the river. As the day advanced it became very warm, for there was not a breath of wind on the river. It was a good day for flies ; they plagued us sadly, attacking us with great persistency. I was kept busy all the time handling my elephant-tail to protect myself against them, but when they got between its long, coarse, black hairs it meant death to them. My eyes had to be everywhere in order to watch for them, and my ears very quick to find out where they were flying ; but in spite of all my watchfulness they succeeded in giving me now and then a sting.

Suddenly we would hear a sharp whiz ; then the men would shout at once : “ Look out, there is an ibolay flying around.” They were not mistaken. There was an ibolay, flying with such rapidity that he was no

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sooner seen than lost to sight. I kept a sharp look-out for him, ready to strike with my elephant's tail, but I was stung twice by one during the day. It was worse than the sting of a bee. I had to be quiet, for it would not have done for an Oguizi to utter cries of pain, but it was very hard sometimes not to do so.

Another fly, the iboca, of the size of a hornet, also quick in its motion, gave the severest bite of all; my clothes were no protection whatever. Often the blood ran down the face or body of the men that were bitten. The fly that annoyed us most was the nchouna, which was very numerous. We could not tell of its approach, for it came unobserved and silently and had inserted its bill so gently that it got its fill of blood before we knew we were bitten. Afterwards the itching began, and lasted several hours, varied at intervals by certain sharp stabs of pain. We paddled as often as we could under the branches of trees overhanging the water, to be protected from the powerful sun. Once, to our utter dismay, our canoe went bang into an elonay's nest. The elonay is a very fierce wasp. There are no flies the natives dread so much. The men shouted: "The elonays are after us; let us get out of the way," and we paddled as fast as we could, to be out of their reach. Ogoola, Ngola, and Quabi seemed to be the men they chiefly

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attacked. These threw themselves into the water. They did not think of crocodiles or anything else. They kept under water quite a while, and after a time came back on board. The bite of the elonays is very painful. It leaves an acrid poison, which causes pain for two or three days. At intervals the poison seems to gather fresh force, and the wound begins to throb.

That night we slept in our canoes. During the night there was a constant howling of wild beasts. I thought the forest was full of leopards, hyenas, and unknown fierce creatures. Fortunately, our canoes were at anchor far away from the banks, and the hungry animals could not reach or spring upon us. Evidently they scented us, and would have been delighted to make a meal of some of our number.

The mosquitoes troubled us so much that we were glad when morning came. Then we were bothered by sand-flies. These disappeared when the sun became powerful enough to drive them away, but the flies that delight in the sun and the heat of the day took their place. The rivers are far worse than the forest in regard to flies.

Suddenly Oshoria, who steered my canoe, shouted :
" Ngooboos [hippotami] ahead." Then he added :
" They are in the middle of the stream ; let us go near

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the shore." The men stopped paddling, and we all looked in the direction in which Oshoria pointed, and saw a herd of hippopotami, looking like stranded logs on the water, for they did not move. We paddled slowly and noiselessly close to the shore, so that the huge beasts could not see us. We came nearer and nearer to them every minute. I counted twenty-two hippopotami.

My attention was suddenly attracted to a part of the river where I heard peculiar loud sounds, or grunts. Looking in that direction, I saw two bull hippopotami by themselves, fighting with each other. They rushed towards each other, — then disappeared under the water, and reappeared again. Their big, ugly mouths, when opened, showed us their tusks. They attacked with great fierceness, lacerating each other's bodies with their crooked tusks. Finally one was victorious, and the other swam away as fast as he could.

We approached the hippopotami slowly and with caution, to within fifty yards of the herd, without seeming to attract their attention. "Let us paddle nearer," I said to the men. We came within twenty-five yards, and then I took "Bulldog," and aiming at the ear, as one of their vulnerable spots, I fired. The animal sank. I found that it was of no use to kill a hippopotamus in the water, for they sink



“Their big, ugly mouths when opened, showed us their tusks”



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to the bottom. The whole herd of hippopotami became much excited at the shot, snorted and plunged under the water, — disappearing and reappearing, — and soon the animals were seen scattered in every direction around us. They dived, and when they rose some of them came dangerously near. I became fearful they would upset our canoes, and that if they succeeded in doing so, they would attack us, and their big crooked tusks were sure to make short work of our poor bodies. Oshoria ordered that we should paddle as fast as we could to get out of their way. One of the hippopotami swam under our canoe, and rose about three yards from us. But we kept on our way untouched, and a few miles further upstream we came to another herd of these unwieldy creatures, sporting and snorting in the water, now popping their huge unshapely heads out, then diving to the bottom.

We passed this herd, and after paddling two or three miles further we saw two cow hippopotami, with their little ones apparently resting on their backs.

CHAPTER XXIII

MUDBANKS COVERED WITH CROCODILES — HOW THEY STALK THEIR PREY — AN UNSUSPECTING BOAR SUDDENLY SWALLOWED UP — HABITS OF THE HUGE CREATURES.

WE continued on our way, and about two hours afterwards entered a small creek, and then got into very tall and dense reeds, through which we had great difficulty in advancing. Suddenly we emerged into a shallow lake, and I saw a strange sight.

I could hardly believe my own eyes. Hundreds of huge crocodiles, and other hundreds of smaller ones were to be seen everywhere resting on the muddy islands basking in the powerful rays of the sun. At first I thought they were logs of dark wood stranded on the mud. In some places the crocodiles were solitary, — in others, three or four, and sometimes ten or twelve were together. I had never seen so many crocodiles before.

Paddling cautiously, we kept gazing at the crocodiles. I did not wish to fire a shot at them, for I did not want to disturb, but to watch them. Oshoria, who was steering, said: "Oguizi, look there!" pointing at the same time with his finger in the direction

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towards which he wanted to draw my attention. Following his gesture, I saw a herd of yellow wild boars standing near the shore. Watching them in the water was a large crocodile. His big head was the only part of his body that could be seen. After a while we noticed his head moving slowly towards the shore. He left hardly a ripple behind him. Then the head became stationary once more.

The boars grunted as they advanced towards the water, headed by their leader. Suddenly they stopped and gave peculiar grunts unlike those they had first given. They were talking among themselves. Then all went on the muddy bank. They were evidently having a grand time in the mud.

Once more we saw the head of the crocodile moving and getting nearer and nearer the boars. The boars appeared to feel uneasy. Suddenly the head of the crocodile disappeared entirely under the water. The boars became quieter, and continued to enjoy themselves.

Oshoria said: "The crocodile is swimming under the water. It has done this to fool the boars. Watch, Oguizi. Soon you will see the crocodile again."

I watched intently and all at once I saw the crocodile's head reappear on the surface of the water. It was hardly perceptible, and quite near the shore this

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time. Before I had time to think, I saw a huge crocodile amidst the boars and seizing one of them in its powerful jaws. All the rest gave a squeal of fear and fled.

The teeth of the crocodile were fastened into the boar's body and as quickly as he had come the monster disappeared in the thick reeds which were close by to devour his prey. The men, laughing, said: "How much better lodged the meat of the boar would have been in our stomachs instead of in that of the crocodile."

We left this spot and continued to paddle amid muddy black islands covered with crocodiles. I said to my hunters: "We must not camp on the shores of the lake, for we shall surely be attacked by crocodiles." Pointing to one that seemed to be eighteen or twenty feet long, I said: "Look at his big jaws; he would make short work of one of you if you got between them."

"He would!" they all shouted with one voice, "but we won't give him a chance."

"We will camp on the top of that high hill yonder," said Oshoria, at the same time pointing out the place to me, "for that is near the path that will lead us to the elephants' hunting-ground." He had hardly uttered these last words when we passed near a muddy



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bank just above the water, upon which I counted nine big crocodiles ; not one of them seemed less than fifteen feet in length. They were perfectly motionless and looked exactly as if they were dead.

Oshoria said : “ How quiet they are, Oguizi ! They seem so harmless and so sleepy, but they look round slyly with their cunning eyes. When hungry they often hide among the reeds. Once I came here to hunt, and three of my dogs were eaten by them. The dogs when thirsty come to the lake to drink, and then are seized by the crocodiles.”

“ Oguizi,” said Ogoola, “ when a crocodile knows a spot where animals come to drink he remains quiet near by and watches constantly. When he sees the game he dives away to make the beast unsuspecting, as we have seen one do with the boars, — then quick as a bird of prey he pounces upon his victim, seizes it in his powerful jaws and carries it to some retired spot to devour it.”

In the evening we camped on the top of the hill just by the path that led to the elephant country. We lighted big fires, and after supper I said : “ Tomorrow we will take to the lake and kill some of the big crocodiles.”

“ You are our Oguizi ; we will follow you everywhere,” they replied.

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As we were seated by the fire Oshoria said : " There was a time when there were several villages on Crocodile Lake, for the land around is good for cultivating and there is much game in the forest. There are yet two or three villages left, which we cannot see from here.

" Now, Oguizi, I am going to tell you a sad story. Years, years ago, there lived in a village by Crocodile Lake a beautiful woman, the wife of a great hunter. All the people loved them, for they were kind, and when the man killed game he always used to divide the meat with other people. He loved his wife dearly. One day as they were crossing the lake a tornado overtook them and upset their canoe. Just as they were on the point of reaching the shore, a crocodile that was in the weeds near by, in the twinkling of an eye seized the man's wife and disappeared, the poor woman uttering a fearful shriek ; then all became silent.

" Oguizi," he added, " a man who loved that woman had changed his shape into that of a crocodile and carried her off. That man, who lived in the same village, was never seen afterward."

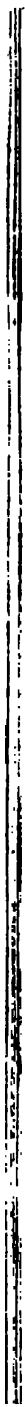
" But," I said, " Oshoria, that man was probably devoured by a leopard or a crocodile."

" No," Oshoria replied, " it was witchcraft."

After this story we went to sleep. The following



"We dragged the board with the crocodile upon it into the water"



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morning we were once more on the lake. The crocodiles were far more lively than the day before. They disappeared constantly under the water and reappeared. Oshoria was forward in my canoe, watching for crocodiles. We wanted to kill one that we could haul easily. We paddled along until we saw one that was in the right place, and then steered towards the big, ugly, sly creature.

When Ngola saw me take "Bulldog" he said, "Crocodile, your days are numbered. 'Bulldog' will kill you, and you will eat no more wild boars, antelopes, and gazelles. What a nice necklace your teeth will make!"

We paddled in such a manner as to keep in the rear of the crocodile, for I wanted to shoot him behind one of his forelegs. The beast was apparently asleep. The men used their paddles so carefully that we could hardly hear them going through the water. Coming into position, I aimed behind the right shoulder and fired. Dear "Bulldog" did his work well. The monster advanced about a yard towards the water, slamming his tail to help him, but he died before he could reach it.

"Let us try to get at the crocodile" I said to Oshoria, to which he replied: "We will try, but it will be difficult, for the mud is very soft and dangerous."

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"It is sure death," they all shouted.

"Then," I answered, "we will not try to get the crocodile into our canoe. Let us go back and get that old abandoned canoe we saw near the shore on our way here, break it up into three boards, bring them with us, lay them on the mud and walk upon them to where the beast lies ; then with the help of a rope we will haul him off." The suggestion was received with shouts of approval and we went for the old canoe to carry out my suggestion.

On our return we succeeded in putting the crocodile upon one of the boards and then after a great deal of work we dragged the board with the crocodile upon it into the water and towed our prize towards our camp.

Near the landing I spied a very large crocodile on the shore. When we came near enough, we all took aim and fired at the same time, and killed the beast instantly. He hardly moved. It was an enormous one, over twenty feet long. What powerful jaws, what tremendous, long round teeth ! We ate crocodile for supper. Before going to sleep, the men rubbed their bodies with oil, for their skin was blistered by the sun, and they seemed very comfortable afterwards.



CHAPTER XXIV

DIFFICULTY OF MAKING OUR WAY—FALLEN TREES AND
DENSE THICKETS—OUR MEAT GIVES OUT—LOOK-
ING FOR KOOLA TREES—A MEAL OF THEIR NUTRI-
TIOUS NUTS—THEIR IMPORTANCE TO THE TRAV-
ELLER IN THE FOREST.

NEXT morning we determined to leave Crocodile Lake and go at once to the elephant country.

We breakfasted on crocodile, to save our provisions. We hauled up our canoes and hid them in the forest. Then we started. Once more we were in the great forest; the foliage was so thick that no one could see the sun or the sky.

We could not walk fast enough to please me, for I wished to reach the elephant hunting-ground. The path was difficult to follow, for it was so little used. Our advance was impeded by fallen trees blocking the path. The big ones had brought down with them many others. So we had sometimes to go through acres of broken branches, losing the path. In many places we had to creep under low branches with our bodies bent, looking more like apes than human beings. We had to climb or go under fallen trees, or

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jump from one root to another, these often being over a foot above the ground, — or else we walked for hours in the bed of a stream.

Fortunately I was in my teens, and weighed only a little over one hundred pounds. I was then only five feet two inches tall. Had I been a tall and heavy fellow I should have had an awfully hard time to creep through the jungle. To-day I am but five feet four inches and a half in height.

We travelled the whole day in a northern direction towards a prairie country. A little before sunset we built our camp. The fires were kept blazing all night, for in the region were many leopards, besides snakes crawling at night. We built fifteen fires in a circle, and slept in the centre, the smoke driving the mosquitoes away.

During the night the men on the watch were startled by a rustling in the jungle. They awoke me at once — the noise was close to our camp. The men thought some one was trying to approach our place and to surprise us. We could not see far away, for the bright fires blinded us. An unseen enemy in the dark could see us, while we could not discover him. The men went, with their fingers on the triggers of their guns, to the place whence they thought the noise proceeded. There was no one there.

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Another time our suspicions were aroused by a rustling of branches; this one was far more pronounced than the first. We looked at each other, and pointed our guns in the direction of the noise. Then the men gave a terrific war-cry — and fired towards the suspected spot, and with a rush made for it. There was no trace whatever of men having been there.

“This noise must have been made by some huge snake,” said Ogoola.

“Yes,” replied Quabi, “it must have been a huge python, or perhaps some night animals.”

We put more wood on the fires, then Oshoria and Ogoola relieved the watch, and the rest of us went to sleep again. I had not been long asleep when I suddenly jumped up — I thought I had heard a noise — but the forest was still. I had been dreaming, I suppose. Oshoria and Ogoola looked at me in astonishment and said: “Only a big leaf fell on the ground, Oguizi.”

The least noise awakened me in the forest. My sleep was as light as a watch-dog's.

At dawn of day, after a breakfast of crocodile meat, we were again on the march. Towards noon we rested a while to eat, after which we continued our march, and looked for elephants; but no traces of them could be seen. The day was sultry, and I be-

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came very thirsty, which was seldom the case, for I had trained myself not to drink between meals. By and by we came upon a little stream the water of which was as clear as crystal. I plucked a big leaf, which I rolled up into a cornucopia, filled with the cool water, and took a big drink. Rising, I saw what I had not noticed before—a number of human footprints. My men were behind and I waited for them. When they came in sight I bade them come towards me. The fellows' feet seemed to glide over the ground—I could not hear their footsteps. I pointed out the footprints to them. Their looks betrayed their feelings. They thought evidently that there were people in the neighborhood. Oshoria said: "It is strange that we should see the footprints of men here."

We continued our march until it was near sunset. Then Oshoria stopped and said: "Let us stop here for the night, for the light in the forest is getting less bright, and warns us that it will be dark soon."

The crocodile meat was getting somewhat tainted. We had got to the last piece. Henceforth we should have to rely upon berries, nuts, and fruits. After our meal the men filled their pipes and seated themselves by the fire. "To-morrow," said Oshoria, "we must be most careful. Our eyes must look everywhere, and our ears must be listening. Sometimes men lie



"I pointed out the footprints to them"

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in wait in the trees along the path, and you are only aware of their presence when they throw a spear or a poisoned arrow, fire a gun at you, or capture you; then it is too late to look out."

In the morning we started without breakfast. "Further on," said Oshoria, "we shall come to the koola-trees. This is the time of the year when they bear nuts. These are the best nuts found in the forest and we shall have plenty of food. The koola nut satisfies a man's hunger better than any other berries or nuts. They taste so good. A man gets so much strength after he has eaten them."

We were getting more and more hungry as the hours passed away, and had to drink water to keep up our strength. At last Ogoola said: "We are near the koola-trees." He was right. A little further on he pointed out to me a grove of four magnificent koola trees. They towered above the other trees round them, and as I was looking at them nut after nut fell. These nuts were dark, quite round, and of the size of a walnut.

The men immediately began to break them with stones. The shell is very hard and thick. The kernel is as large as that of a cherry. My dear hunters, even before they ate a single one, poured them upon my lap, and said:

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"Oguizi, eat, eat; you are hungry."

"No," said I, "we will eat together." They broke the shells of a lot of the nuts and afterwards we began to eat them. The kernel was whitish and as condensed in substance as the almond. After I had eaten some thirty of them I could not eat one more. We all laid ourselves flat on the ground and took a nap, for we were exhausted from hunger. When we awoke we could hear the nuts falling on the ground — sometimes one by one, sometimes a lot together. This delighted our hearts, for no man could go up the trees, they were so tall and their trunks were so big.

That day we collected all the nuts that fell on the ground and made our supper of them. After our meal we seated ourselves in the centre of our fires; then the men filled their pipes. Ogoola, who had been the first to see the koola trees, said: "Oguizi, if it were not for the koola trees we hunters would often die of hunger in the forest. Aniembié [the good spirit] made them grow for us. Men cannot subsist on berries and fruits; not only are they not strengthening — though they prevent a man from starving — but if you eat too much of them you are sure to be ill with dysentery. We are never ill from eating koola nuts."

I found afterwards that thirty nuts were enough for



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one meal and would keep a man vigorous from morning until evening.

“The koola trees,” continued Ogoola, “are sometimes found like those in this place, three or four together, but oftener they are single. They are easily recognized, for they are among the big trees of the forest. We generally make our paths pass by where they are, for it is hard to carry food enough for a long journey,—the plantain gets ripe so soon and the bunches are so heavy, and the igouma is also very heavy. During the season of the koola nuts, we carry very little food with us. Our greatest enemies at that time are the boars, for they like the nuts as well as we do, and feed much upon them. Then they become very fat however, and are delicious to eat. The gorillas and other ‘men of the woods’ are also very fond of koola nuts.”

Then the men added a lot of wood to the fires and we went to sleep. Nothing happened during the night to disturb us, and the next morning we collected the nuts that had fallen during the night, cracked them, and started again for the elephant hunting-ground.

CHAPTER XXV

LOST IN THE FOREST — A HERD OF ELEPHANTS LURES
ME ON — SEPARATED FROM MY HUNTERS — TWO
NIGHTS ON THE GROUND AND ONE IN A TREE —
FOUND AT LAST — JOY OF THE MEN.

WE had not left our encampment two hours when we fell in with a great number of elephant tracks. These seemed to show that the elephants had been there during the night. Further on the tracks became so numerous that we thought several herds must have followed each other, for the jungle was trodden down in every direction. We held a council. The men said that the elephants were not very far away, and agreed to leave the path and hunt the huge beasts, meeting in the evening in the spot where we then stood. We made marks on the trees, and cut a number of boughs and broke others, in order that we might recognize the place.

Oshoria and I were to hunt together. Quabi, Ogoola, and Ngola made up the other party. We left the path and got into thick forest. I had never seen so many elephant tracks before. There must have been at least one hundred elephants together.



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After two hours' walk, we heard the tramping of the elephants ahead of us. They were breaking the branches of trees and feeding upon the leaves. Soon after we heard them trumpeting. I looked at "Bulldog," Oshoria looked at his gun also, and we marched carefully in the direction of the elephants. I got a glimpse of several, and went towards them. Just as I was on the point of taking aim, the elephants fled, breaking and treading down the saplings that were in their way. I followed the track they had left behind them, in the hope of seeing them again. Ere long I spied a bull elephant, and seven cows. These fled also. I chased them but was not able to overtake them.

Without my being aware of it, time had passed more quickly than I thought. It was getting late, and I retraced my steps towards the place where we had agreed to meet. I had lost sight of Oshoria. After a while I found I did not recognize some of the trees I had especially noticed, and did not see the marks we had made when following the elephants. I began to suspect that I was walking in a wrong direction. I had not met two ebony trees which had particularly attracted my attention on account of their size. Surely I had gone the wrong way. I shouted after Oshoria, but received no answer back.

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Finally I came to a path which I thought was the one upon which we had agreed to meet, but I could not tell whether I was beyond or lower down than our place of meeting. I walked on for a while to see if I could recognize some of the trees, but I could not.

I seated myself on the trunk of a tree that had fallen across the path and waited for Oshoria and the other men. I had hardly seated myself when the bloody head of a monkey with its eyes plucked out fell within a yard in front of me, and I knew that a guanionien, the largest eagle of the forest, was devouring his prey, perched on a giant tree, though the foliage was so thick that I could not see the bird, called by the natives the leopard of the air. Then I tried to call to mind how it had happened that I had lost Oshoria, and I remembered that we had not before seen the fallen tree upon which I was seated. This made me believe that I was further on. I waited but Oshoria did not come. Then I thought that perhaps he was waiting for me still further ahead, and decided to go on myself. I broke a few branches on each side of the path and made marks on the bark of the trees with my hunting knife. I put a big handful of leaves on the tree upon which I had been seated, and I laid parallel with the path three sticks, with sharp points at one end, indicating the direction I was to take. Thus Oshoria would

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be sure to know where I had gone when he passed the place.

I walked slowly. Time passed ; but no Oshoria came, and night was near. To add to my difficulties, I came to a place where the path forked into three distinct branches. I determined to go no further that day, but to camp for the night at the junction of these paths.

I shouted with all my might after Oshoria and the rest of my hunters, but only the echo of my voice came back. I fired a gun, but the same silence continued.

Fortunately I had some koola nuts with me, but before eating them, as it was getting late, I collected a lot of dead branches, of which the forest is full, and made four separate piles of wood for fires,—when lo ! I remembered that Oshoria had my steel and flint. I had lent them to him to light his pipe before we started in the morning, and he had forgotten to return them to me ; and I had left my matches at Regundo's.

I took two pieces of very dry wood, a large and a small one, and after rubbing them rapidly and vigorously together I succeeded in getting a little fire, to which I added some dried fungus, and soon my four fires were in full blaze. I slept surrounded by them.

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During the night a dead branch fell with a great crash and awoke me. I put more wood on the fires to keep away the wild beasts, and went to sleep again.

When I awoke in the morning I thought of Oshoria and of my hunters and said to myself: "Surely we shall find one another to-day."

Taking from my bag twenty koola nuts, I ate them for breakfast; I counted the others, and found that I had enough for a day and a half, that is, for three meals.

When I was ready to start, I chose the centre path out of the three branching ones, cut tree-limbs on each side, then again sharpened three sticks at one end and laid them parallel with the path, the sharp end designed to show the direction I had taken. I shouted now and then with the whole strength of my lungs, "Oshoria, Oshoria," but the forest remained silent. Then I gave the peculiar native cry of "Whoo, whoo, whoo—a," which reaches very far, but no answer came back. I fired "Bulldog," but only its echo returned to me.

I kept on walking slowly, and towards noon I took a meal of koola nuts, but ate only ten of them. While I was eating, "Bulldog" lay at my side. I looked at the dear old rifle, and said to it: "'Bulldog,'

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you are the only friend I have now : I think a great deal of you, and I love you. Do not fail me in time of danger or hunger."

Then, taking the precious rifle on my shoulders, I continued my way. After a while, I heard a rustling in the jungle, and looking in that direction, a strange sight met my eyes. I saw a bald-headed ape, the nshiego mbouvé, with a baby. The mother had a very black face, while the face of the baby was so white that the little fellow looked quite human. The mother was seated on the ground eating some fruit and giving some to the little nshiego mbouvé, that was looking in her face, seated between her legs. I hid behind a tree and watched the two.

Then the little fellow lay on his back and his mother cleaned his skin with her nails, taking off dandruff, or killing little insects. Once or twice the baby nshiego mbouvé said, "Woe, woe," and afterwards clung to his mother's breast. Then he climbed to her shoulders, the mother uttering low, guttural sounds of happiness or contentment.

How human they both looked ! The little fellow's face was so pale that one might have thought he had just recovered from a long illness. But it was his natural color. Suddenly the big nshiego mbouvé gave a shrill, piercing cry and with her baby

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holding on to her ran away into the thick of the forest. She had evidently seen me.

I continued my way. I do not know why, but the forest seemed to me more silent than before. I began to feel very anxious at the non-appearance of Oshoria and my hunters. "Paul," I said, "are you going to be lost in this great forest, and die of starvation or illness? Your ammunition cannot last forever, and the fever may come at any time and you may be so feeble afterwards that you cannot help yourself. Then it will be all over with you."

The day went by. The path still led on—and no answer had come to my cries of "Whoe—whoe—whoe—a." The dim light of the forest told me that the day was coming to its close and that it was about time to make my camp. I stopped beside a little stream of clear water. I thought of Oshoria, of Ngola, Quabi, and Ogoola. I wondered if they also were lost and making their camp, and whether they were separated or together. I looked for two pieces of dry wood, and lighted four fires, as the day before, in the midst of which I lay down. I was very tired, for "Bulldog" was very heavy. I was soon lulled to sleep by the murmur of the little rivulet winding its way to some bigger one. I dreamt of home, of friends, of corn-bread, of turkey, of roast

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beef. When I awoke it was broad daylight — and only the embers of the fires remained. It was fortunate that no leopards had been round during the night, this unusual sleep had done me good.

I ate the last of my koola nuts, and before starting for the day I made the same kind of marks I had made each morning, so that my men could know the direction I had taken. I hoped I should find some koola trees, for I was hungry. I had not left the camp ten minutes before I came to two koola trees under which the path passed. There were but few nuts on the ground, as the wild boars had been there but a short time before, judging from the freshness of their tracks.

I collected what nuts there were. I was sure not to starve on that day. "Providence," I exclaimed, "thou art kind to me. Thou hast always been kind to me."

After a hearty meal of nuts I continued on my way. The path seemed endless and was very crooked. Many a time I shouted "Oshoria, Ogoola, Ngola, Quabi," but got no answer. Taking courage, I said: "This path must come to an end or reach some inhabited place." I only fired "Bulldog" once that day, for I had become chary of my ammunition. Again the day passed without sight of any of my

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hunters. The country I traversed was in many places very marshy, which made me believe that a river was not far off. Before dark I built my camp. I then tried to make a fire with two pieces of wood. I rubbed them against each other ; the little piece dug quite a hole in the big one, but no smoke came ; either it was not the right sort of wood, or it was too damp. I took some other wood but succeeded no better. Night was fast coming on. Then I said to myself : " I cannot sleep on the ground in the dark, for if a leopard passes by he is sure to spring on me and devour me. Even if I climb a tree and rest in the midst of its branches, he is sure to climb also if he scents me." The leopards are great tree-climbers. The only way for me was to ascend a tall and very slim tree that no leopard could climb on account of the small size of its trunk. Looking ahead in the path I saw three very slender trees close together. Their branches intertwined with each other, after a certain height. I saw that from the first tree I could reach the second by creeping on one of its branches, and would be able to reach the third tree, that was the highest, in the same manner. I spied a branch about thirty feet from the ground, upon which I could rest for the night. There the prowling leopards could not reach me. I cut a slender creeper for a strap with

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which to fasten "Bulldog" on my back when I ascended the trees ; then unloaded the dear rifle, to guard against accident. I climbed the first tree, took hold of one of its branches and lifted myself up ; but not without great trouble, for "Bulldog" was much in the way. I succeeded, however, in reaching the second tree ; I was then about fifteen feet above the ground. To reach the third tree from the second one was a very hazardous undertaking, and I ran great risk of tumbling down and breaking my neck, for the branch that was to help me to cross over was very slender ; and I had some doubt if it would carry me safely. At first I thought I would drop "Bulldog" down, but I said upon reflection, " Paul, whatever you do, do not let your rifle be separated from you ; an elephant might come and get hold of it with his trunk and break it ; some leopard or other wild beast might beset you."

With some hesitation I crept upon the transverse limb—but finally succeeded in reaching the third tree. Then I took a long breath and rested a while, after which I ascended still higher until I reached a height of about thirty feet, where I found a branch upon which I could rest for the night. There the prowling leopard could not reach me. A slender liane hung from a tree above my head, looking

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exactly like a snake, and I cut off about eight feet of it, and using it as a rope, made it fast round my waist and the trunk of the tree, so that, in case I fell asleep, I should not fall to the ground. I should have to remain on the tree eleven hours, for daylight would not come before that time. Soon darkness set in.

In the silence of the night I could hear the slightest noise. Two or three times I thought I heard little night animals walking on the dead leaves in search of prey, but I could not see two feet ahead of me, it was so dark. Once I thought I saw through the darkness the shining eyes of a leopard. I thought he was looking at me. The cold perspiration dropped from my forehead at the idea, but I was mistaken. The eyes were two big fireflies.

Time seemed so long I thought the night would never come to an end. At last I heard the cackling of the guinea fowl, the forerunner of morning, and dawn came at last! I came down the same way I had ascended. After reaching the ground I stretched my legs, for they were very stiff, then ate some koola nuts. I did not like them any more; I had "gouamba," or hunger for meat. I shouted with all my might, "Oshoria, Ngola, Ogoola, Quabi." No answer. Then I fired "Bulldog," and lo! in



"With some hesitation I crept upon the transverse limb"



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less than two minutes I heard what I thought to be the detonation of a gun, far, far off. It was certainly not the echo of "Bulldog." A thrill of joy ran through me. It was an answer from one of my hunters. But I did not dare to trust my ears. Perhaps I was mistaken. To make sure, I loaded two cartridges with twice the usual amount of powder, and then fired. The charge was so heavy that it almost threw me over. Soon after I heard two guns. There was no mistake this time. These were answers to mine.

I followed the path in the direction where I thought the sound came from. After a while I fired another shot; then I heard another in answer. This time it was much nearer. Forward I went, and after a little while I fired again. The firing of another gun responded to mine, and this time the detonation was quite near. I shouted, "Oshoria, Ogoola, Ngola, Quabi," and heard the shouts of "Oguizi, Oguizi," in answer. A short time after I saw in the path Oshoria, Ogoola, Quabi, and Ngola. They were all there. In the twinkling of an eye we were in each other's embrace, after which the men shouted: "We are men! we are men!" Then Oshoria seated himself on the ground, took his idol from his bag, muttered words I could not understand, and said, "Oguizi,

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the idol told me this morning that we should meet you to-day."

Soon after a big blazing fire was burning, and a great quantity of wood was piled upon it, and when it was reduced to charcoal, three men put some large pieces of boar upon the embers. They had killed the animal while searching for me. The smell of the roasted boar was delicious to me, for I had "gouamba" badly.

Oshoria was the salt carrier. Salt was very precious to us, and it made the boar's meat taste so good. After our meal I recounted to them how I had lost Oshoria, and what had happened to me.

Then came the turn of Oshoria, who said: "The elephants are the cause of the Oguizi and me becoming separated. I followed that day the track which I thought the Oguizi had taken, but it was the wrong one. The second day I saw in one place the marks of the Oguizi's shoes, but when the ground became hard I lost them. The second day in the morning I came to the place where we had agreed to meet. There I found Ngola, Ogoola, and Quabi waiting for us. They asked me: 'Where is the Oguizi?' I replied: 'He is gone, he has disappeared.' We followed the path, and saw the marks you had left to guide us. How glad we were this morning when we heard

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‘Bulldog’ talk. Then our guns talked to ‘Bulldog.’ Our hearts were filled with joy, for we thought we should never see the Oguizi any more.”

Then they all cried : “ Here we are once more with the good Oguizi ! ”

Oshoria said : “ Oguizi, we thought you had changed shape, and left us. Then we said : ‘ The good Oguizi would not leave us without saying good-by, for he told us that he loved us. ’ ”

“ You are right, my hunters,” I replied, “ the Oguizi would not go away without saying good-by to you, for you are his friends, and he loves you.”

At my words they came forward closer to me and all looked in my face, with great wonder. I wished I could know what their thoughts were.

“ Oguizi,” said Oshoria, “ though I have hunted many dry and rainy seasons in the forest, I have never seen so many elephant tracks before. The animals must have been driven here by being too much hunted further inland, or by the bashikouay ants. To-morrow the path will end in a beautiful prairie, and there we shall meet, I think, many elephants.”

We were so tired that we determined to remain where we were for the rest of the day, as there was a clear rivulet of water close by. We had some boar’s meat for supper, and after our meal, my hunters lay



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flat on their backs upon the ground, and held the soles of their feet within a few inches of the fire. The sole of the foot often becomes very sore from walking upon pebbles, or upon the roots of trees, and that was the way the natives cured the soreness of their feet. Before we knew it we were all fast asleep.



CHAPTER XXVI

THE ELEPHANT HUNTING-GROUND—THE BEAUTIFUL
PRAIRIE SKIRTING THE FOREST—THE WELCOME
SKY AND SUN AND STARS AFTER THE FOREST
GLOOM—HUNTING ELEPHANTS BY MOONLIGHT—
THREE LARGE HERDS—NARROW ESCAPE OF OSHORIA
AND MYSELF—DEATH OF THE HUGE TUSKER.

WE took up our march again at dawn, walking at a very quick pace, for we were all anxious to reach the prairie. After travelling about eight miles I noticed that the light in the forest was getting brighter. This was the sure indication that we were coming to an open space. A moment after, we came out on a lovely prairie, which, after the dark forest, looked the more beautiful. It was so pleasant to see again the blue sky, the white floating clouds, and the sun, to feel the wind blowing in our faces, — for the forest is all the time as quiet as if wind did not exist. “To-night,” I thought, “how happy I shall be, for I shall see the stars and the moon.”

The waving grass looked very lovely to me, for I was tired of seeing nothing but trees day after day, month after month, and the world had never appeared

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more beautiful than it did that morning. Perhaps also it was because I had found my friends again.

I stood still for a while, gazing at the sky, and said :
"Sunshine makes the heart of man happy. I do not wonder that in ancient times men worshipped the sun, for it is the source of all life upon earth. Without sun no vegetation or life would exist."

Along the borders of the forest were groups of plantain trees, some standing not far from us.

"The elephants are, as we know, in the neighborhood," said Oshoria. "They will surely come here to eat the young leaves of the plantain trees and their fruit. We could not be here at a better time, for the moon is on the wane and we shall be able to see the elephants well and at the same time the moon will not be too bright. Let us build our camp on the border of the forest."

To this we all agreed, and the rest of the day we were busy collecting material for our camp. Afterwards we cleaned our guns, and swore that we would not return to the plantation before killing an elephant or two. That night we slept soundly, for we needed rest. In the morning I left my men in the camp, as I loved to hunt alone. I walked along the border of the forest, thus having all the way a good sight of the prairie, while at the same time I was hidden by the trees.

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I had walked hardly two hours before I thought I heard the booming tramp of elephants. I lay down upon the ground, my right ear to the earth in order to make sure that I was not mistaken. I heard nothing, however, and thought I must have been mistaken. But, continuing my way, I suddenly heard a great racket in the forest. Elephants were breaking branches of trees. I looked at "Bulldog"; it was all right. I advanced cautiously in the direction of the noise, and soon saw under the trees bordering the prairie five elephants,—a bull and four cows. I crawled towards them like a snake. I drew nearer and nearer. Now and then I would raise my head above the grass to get a look at the elephants. The bull was a huge creature and seemed to be over ten feet in height,—the cows from nine to nine feet and a half. Finally I hid behind a tree, for I wanted to watch the noble animals at my ease. I noticed the big tusks of the bull and thought of his charging a man and impaling him upon them.

The animals were feeding upon the fruit growing upon a cluster of trees. One was shaking a tree with its trunk entwined round the slender stem. Another was butting its head against a tree, and after a lot of the fruit had fallen they picked it up, uttering occasionally a gentle trumpeting of contentment.

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I was so intensely interested in watching them, that I forgot that I had "Bulldog" with me. All at once the bull trumpeted loudly and they all fled, plunging headlong into the forest. I immediately returned to the camp and told of the news. We held a council, and it was agreed that we should set out on an elephant hunt that night.

We took a survey of the surrounding country and saw that the forest advanced here and there into the prairie just as the land does into the sea, and formed in a number of places what might be called capes. These capes were splendid places from which to watch for elephants. We waited impatiently for the night and lighted no fire that day. We agreed to divide into two parties, Oshoria and I going to the nearest cape on our right, which was near a fine field of plantain trees. Ogoola, Quabi, and Ngola were to go to another cape on our left, from which they could also have a good view of the surrounding country. They could see far towards the north, we towards the south.

When evening came we bade each other good-night and started for our respective places. When I looked back I saw the dark forms of Ogoola, Quabi, and Ngola moving away from us. We reached our place and hid under a tall tree, the branches of which extended over the grass. We were at the extreme end

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of the point, near a big field of plantain trees, a great many of these bearing fruit not yet full grown. The stars were shining brightly in the blue sky and multitudes of fireflies were moving above the grass, almost illuminating the prairie.

By the brighter light above the trees we knew that the moon had risen. After a while it appeared just above the forest, and gradually rose higher and higher and shed its tempered light over the country.

Soon life began to show itself—I saw a few antelopes emerging from the forest. They were fine animals, with long spiral horns, but we let them alone, for we were after larger game. On the other side of the prairie we saw a large herd of buffaloes—I counted thirty-seven of them. Their bulls are very dangerous animals; they charge furiously, and only a very powerful gun can be effective with a shot in front, on account of the formation of their horns. I always took very careful aim when shooting them—they were among the animals I dreaded most. They hide during the day in the forest, and come out at night. But we left the buffaloes also alone.

How impressive was the night on the prairie. We could hear once in a while the cry of the owl, and see flying squirrels above our heads. The sky and the dear twinkling stars were looking down upon us.

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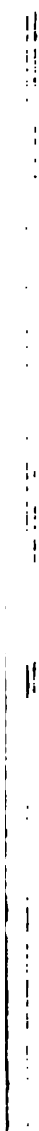
The time seemed very long, as it always does when one is kept waiting. Three hours passed away. No elephants had come in sight. I scanned the prairie carefully as far as my eye could reach. Suddenly my attention was drawn, in the far distance, towards a big black spot in the grass which I took to be a cluster of shrubs, but wondered that I had not noticed it before. I watched the black spot, for I was not sure that it was formed by young trees. Soon I saw it moving slowly and advancing towards our side of the prairie. I thought they were elephants, but they might also have been hippopotami, for there might have been a river in the neighborhood. The animals were so far away I could not distinguish them.

I looked for Oshoria, but he was not in sight. Where had he gone?

The black mass kept moving slowly, and I watched it intently. After a while, I made out certainly that it was a herd of elephants. Later I distinguished a huge bull which was leading them. I counted twenty-three elephants. Looking again for Oshoria, I saw him standing close to me, also watching the elephants. He made a sign for me to follow him, which I did. Then he pointed out to me a big, moving black mass. It was another herd, but much larger than the one I had discovered. They were walking slowly in the



"I distinguished a huge bull which was leading them"



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direction of Quabi, Ngola, and Ogoola. I could see the herd sidewise. The elephants were led by a huge bull, which looked larger than any of the others. I made out forty-three elephants. As they stood still, their bodies slowly rocked and swayed to and fro. Once in a while their big ears pricked up. Their trunks were in motion, curling and uncurling themselves. Their tails with the long, coarse, black hair beat their flanks. Now and then the cows squealed, and their squeals were followed by the violent trumpeting of the bulls, which sounded strange in the midst of the silence of the night.

Suddenly the herd stopped, and the bull uttered a piercing trumpeting. Did he scent danger? Was he aware of our presence? What was the cause of the sudden halt? These were questions I asked myself. After a while I heard another trumpeting, unlike the first one we heard. Then a general trumpeting of all the herd filled the prairie with its sound. This was responded to by a loud, angry trumpeting from the bull of the other herd. Were these two bulls to fight for the mastery of the two herds? A fight between two such monsters would be fine to look at. "If the bulls fight," I whispered very low to Oshoria, "we must look on and not fire at them."

I had hardly uttered these words when a big cloud

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hid the moon, and the herd of elephants could not be seen. When the cloud had passed over, we saw the elephants moving slowly.

Just then I was startled by a great crash of trees in our rear. Elephants were in the forest and were going out on to the prairie. The noise they made as they tramped in the jungle came nearer and nearer ; the huge creatures were evidently coming our way. Oshoria came close to me and took me to a very large tree, so as to be protected by its size, which would prevent us from being trampled upon by the elephants. Suddenly the elephants stopped, the bull uttered a sharp and shrill trumpeting. The bulls of the two other herds answered also with trumpetings of defiance. There was to be a great battle. For one reason or another the elephants in the forest changed their course and entered the prairie on our right. I counted seventeen of them ; they were walking in single file, led by the bull, which after a while stopped ; the herd then came together into a group. The bull uttered another loud trumpeting, which was answered by the trumpeting of the other two bulls. Not a buffalo was in sight ; at the appearance of the elephants they had moved away.

It was a fine sight to see these three herds walking slowly in the prairie, with the dim light of the moon shining upon them. They were the very emblem of strength



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among the animals of the earth. The herd that had been in our rear was the first to enter a plantain field. Soon after we heard them breaking the plantain trees, while the animals now and then gave forth low trumpetings of satisfaction.

We left our hiding-place and crept towards the plantain trees. Oshoria looked at his guns, — I looked at mine. The cartridges were in place. Soon we were in the midst of the scattered elephants. I had hardly seen them when I thought I heard the trampling of one of the two other herds coming in our direction. If that was the case, we should be in great danger, for we should find ourselves between the two herds. If they met, it was probable that the two bulls would fight. "Who knows," I said to myself, "perhaps the third herd is coming here also. Then there may ensue a grand battle among the bulls for the mastery of the herds, — and the cow elephants may run in every direction."

There was no time to be lost, if we did not wish to have elephants all around us; either we must kill one of those in sight, or fire a gun to scare them. In either case there was danger.

I noticed that the bull and cow elephants were restless, — they evidently thought the two other herds were coming towards them.

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Oshoria, who was within a few feet from me, was in a better position to shoot, for I had a number of plantain trees in my way. I could not get a good aim.

The gun of Oshoria rose slowly, — then I saw a flash and heard a terrific detonation, and, to my consternation, the bull charged in my direction. He had had a glimpse of me. He was coming at full speed, while the crash made by the frightened and fleeing elephants added to the confusion.

In the twinkling of an eye I took three steps backward, and was protected by the burned trunk of a tree. I was just in time. The infuriated animal passed close by me. As he did so, I fired behind his right shoulder, but he did not fall, and went on into the forest followed by the cow elephants. I was sure "Bulldog" had hit the huge beast, and Oshoria was much surprised that the elephant had not fallen dead. He eyed "Bulldog," as if to say: "I do not understand why you did not kill the elephant outright."

In the meantime, the detonation of our guns had scared the two other herds; we heard them tearing down everything in the forest that opposed their flight. This was a narrow escape of mine; but for the tree I should have been trampled upon or impaled, — so quick was the charging of the bull. Then the advice of Regundo came into my mind, that a hunter should

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never lose his head before sudden danger. I was covered with perspiration, and my heart beat quickly from the excitement.

We returned to the camp, and Ngola, Ogoola, and Quabi came back at dawn, reporting that they had been watching the two herds of elephants, and fully expected to kill one, but the firing of our guns had blighted their hopes.

After breakfast, Oshoria and I went in search of the bull we had shot, for we were sure he was wounded. We came to the track the elephant had left behind him, and after a short time, not five hundred yards from the place where we had shot him, Oshoria gave a cluck to draw my attention, and pointed ahead. I looked and saw a huge bull elephant lying on the ground upon his stomach, with his head downward, but facing us. Our coming seemed to rouse him. He raised his head and looked at us. He evidently recognized in us his enemies of the night, who had inflicted his deadly wound, — and before we had even time to think, and while I was pitying the poor beast, he rose and charged us at furious speed. We had just time to get out of his way. He dashed past us and fell down, exhausted by his efforts. He wanted revenge before dying. Oshoria fired at the elephant and shouted to me to fire, for he was not sure that he

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would not rise again. The magnificent beast was dead when we came near. He was over ten feet in height, and had very large tusks. We found that he had been wounded. His charge had been so unexpected that I wondered that one of us had not been killed. This was the narrowest escape I ever had with elephants.

I looked at the huge bull. His thick hide was covered with scars, — most of them healed, but two or three new. All bore witness to the numerous fights he had had with other bulls for the mastery of the herd. He had had to assert his supremacy by constant fighting, and had he not been killed by us, the day was sure to come, as he grew old, when he would at last find a bull stronger than he was.

At the sound of our guns Ogoola, Ngola, and Quabi left their camp and soon came up. Oshoria and I were seated on the huge beast when they appeared. Oshoria shouted to them: "We are men! We are men!" and they responded: "You are men! You are men indeed!"

Quabi went after an axe and the big hunting-knives. The first thing we did on his return was to take off the fine tusks from the elephant's head. It was hard work, for they were embedded in the skull for nearly three feet. One tusk weighed ninety-seven,



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the other ninety-one pounds. The tusks are never of the same weight. Then we brought a great deal of the meat to the camp, for we had nothing to eat, and the men took two large pieces into the forest for Mombo and Olombo.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE KILLING OF A SECOND ELEPHANT—HOW BULL ELEPHANTS FIGHT—THE CONTEST FOR THE LEADERSHIP OF THE HERD—OSHORIA'S GRAPHIC ACCOUNT OF A BATTLE ROYAL WITNESSED BY HIM—RETURN TO THE PLANTATION.

QUABI and Ngola went to reconnoitre during the day, and came back with the news that further down the prairie there was a little lake, the shores of which were entirely covered with elephants' tracks, and that the forest near there showed that elephants had been in that region during the night.

We all went to sleep, so that we might be in good trim for the coming night. When we awoke, the sun had disappeared in the west behind the trees of the forest. We cut some of the meat of the bull elephant we had killed into thin slices, and roasted these on charcoal. The meat was very tough, but fortunately I had good teeth and a splendid digestion.

The eating of coarse food is very healthful and helped me to lay in a good store of health for future years; and to this day I have never suffered from a single attack of dyspepsia. During my explorations, I only



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drank the delicious water of the springs, or crystal-like rivulets of the forest.

After our supper we left for the little lake of which Quabi and Ngola had told us. Night overtook us on our way. We skirted the border of the forest, so as to be in the shadow of the trees and so as not to be discovered by elephants or other animals. The grass was not more than a foot and a half in height, and it was pleasant to walk freely without meeting fallen trees, or stepping upon roots, and without bending over, jumping, or climbing, and it was pleasant, too, to have for companions the lovely stars twinkling above our heads.

After walking about six miles we came in sight of a little lake nestled in the midst of undulating hills. We concluded not to remain by the lake, but to hide under the trees near by. There we waited for the rising of the moon with the expectation of seeing elephants again. Towards eleven o'clock the moon rose, and as it was on the wane it was not as light as the preceding night.

We waited and waited, but no elephants came, and it got to be nearly four o'clock. We were on the point of giving up the hope of seeing any when we discerned the black form of one walking toward the lake. We looked all round to discover if there were

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any herd in sight, but there was none. The one before us was evidently a bull that had been driven away from a herd by a stronger bull and was wandering solitary. Then I said: "Ogoola, Quabi, and Ngola, upon you will devolve the task of killing this elephant, as Oshoria and I have killed one. Prove that you are great hunters."

Oshoria, with an imploring look said to me: "May I not go also?"

"No," I replied. "Three men even are too many, for the grass is so short; besides, we must give them a chance to say, on their return, that they killed an elephant when they were hunting with the Oguizi. We will watch them."

"You are right, Oguizi," replied Oshoria.

I was always right with these dear fellows.

The three hunters started. They bent over so low that their heads and shoulders only appeared above the grass; they were going directly towards the lone elephant. At times they would lie flat on the ground and disappear entirely from sight, then reappear again. The wind was in their favor, for it blew from the elephant towards them, so the huge beast could not scent danger. Fortunately also, they and he were going in the same direction, towards the lake. I whispered to Oshoria: "I am glad that the



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men will be in such a position that when they shoot the elephant, he will not be able to see them and charge."

For before saying this it had suddenly come across my mind that the elephant might suddenly turn and follow them and that it would have perhaps been better if we had shared the danger with them, for nothing can be more dangerous than to face an elephant in an open space, and give him a straight shot. It requires then a very cool head, and a very quick eye to move just in time to avoid the charge of the huge creature.

The three men approached nearer and nearer, for the elephant had stopped several times, evidently to find out if there were any cows near that loved him better than the bull that had driven him away from the herd. At last the men came within gunshot. The elephant stood still, looking at the water of the lake. He was evidently thinking of taking a bath. Two of the hunters were on his left side, the other on his right. We watched them with breathless attention. All at once we saw them stand up, — then three flashes, followed by the detonations of their guns. Then we saw the huge beast falter and fall. We ran towards our three friends as fast as our legs could carry us, and when we came near them the three were

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seated on the body of the elephant. They shouted to us: "We are men! We are men!" And we shouted back to them: "You are men! You are men!" Then we all shouted together: "We are men!"

The elephant was a bull, but not so large as the one killed the night before. We had our axes with us and after some hard blows succeeded in getting out the two small tusks. We took no meat with us, for we had all we wanted. When we returned to our camp it was broad daylight, and we turned in and slept almost the whole day.

That evening, as we were seated silently round a huge fire, Oshoria suddenly said: "Oguizi, it is a great sight to see two bull elephants fight together for the mastery of the herd. The solitary one has generally been driven away from another herd by a stronger bull, and wanders in the forest all alone until he sees another herd; then he tries his luck again with the ruling bull. Twice in my life I have seen such a fight."

"Tell me all about it," I said.

"I will," he replied, and after a pause he began: "One evening at dusk, not far from where we stand, I saw a big herd of elephants emerging from the forest. They walked slowly and silently in the middle of the

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prairie on their way towards the lake. They stopped twice, squealed and trumpeted, and then continued their march. Suddenly the bull stopped again, and the cow elephants came near him.

“At the same time I saw emerging from the forest on the opposite side a huge bull elephant. He was alone, and no herd followed him. The bull which had a herd trumpeted fiercely, as they do when they are angry and want to fight. The solitary bull answered in the same way, signifying that he also was ready to fight. The cows gave forth piercing squeals, and remained by themselves.

“Then the two bulls ran towards each other. It was fine to see them. The solitary bull had evidently not forgotten his previous ignominious defeat, and wanted to avenge himself, hoping to be the victor this time and have a herd of his own. They squealed and trumpeted in the fiercest manner as they approached each other. I could see that the cow elephants were very uneasy, for they rocked and swayed quickly to and fro, their trunks also waving rapidly.

“As the two bulls neared each other their speed increased. Then I heard a thumping, booming sound, like two big trees knocking against each other. Their heads had met with terrific force. For a while they pushed each other, neither of them moving backward

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or forward, but at last the solitary bull retreated slowly, facing his enemy. He proved the weaker. The victorious elephant stood his ground looking at his enemy, who halted after a while, and stood still. They looked at each other steadily, then each uttered a long trumpeting of defiance.

“The cows remained at the same place all the time, waiting for the victor to come to them. Then the two bull elephants charged again. The leader of the herd by a clever movement succeeded in grazing the body of his antagonist, inflicting a fearful gash with his right tusk all along his side. The great object of the bull elephant in fighting is to exhaust his rival and pierce his side with his tusks. Elephants when they charge cannot stop suddenly and turn back, the momentum occasioned by their weight being too great to allow them to do so.

“Once more the two bulls looked at each other. The wounded elephant did not want to give up the fight before another trial of strength. He felt that this was his last chance. They came towards each other at a furious rate. The two heads met with tremendous force, and a sound like the sudden rolling of thunder far away in the forest. A man caught between those two heads would have been mashed as flat as the hide of an antelope. The solitary bull was stunned



"The two enormous tusks went through his side"



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by the blow. He staggered an instant, and it was all over with him. He had not the strength to flee for his life, and at that moment the other charged him on the flank. The two enormous tusks went through his side, and he fell dead. The tusks had penetrated nearly three feet into the body. The victor returned to his herd, which received him with loud trumpetings of joy.

"Often," concluded Oshoria, "one finds big tusks of ivory in the forest. These come from elephants killed in like manner. Some also come from elephants who have died of old age or of their wounds some time subsequent to such a fight as this one."

We remained three more days on the prairie; but no more elephants were to be seen. They had all evidently left that part of the country. So we determined to return to the plantation, with our four tusks. When we came to Crocodile Lake we found our canoes; we were glad to continue our journey by water, for not only had we the tusks to carry, but also plenty of smoked elephant meat.

When we reached King Regundo's plantation we were received with great demonstrations of joy by Regundo, his wife, and all the slaves. They exclaimed: "Will not our master's heart be glad when he sees these large tusks, for he will get many goods when he barter for them."

CHAPTER XXVIII

DEPARTURE FROM THE SLAVES' PLANTATIONS — ARRIVAL
AT KING MOMBO'S — A WARM GREETING FROM THE
OLD KING — HIS SACRED PROMISE NEVER TO PART
WITH HIS SLAVES — FAREWELL TO HIM AND HIS
PEOPLE.

THE evening of our arrival, all my hunters and their wives, and all the slaves on the plantations came to spend the evening with me. Regundo, Oshoria, Ngola, Ogoola, and Quabi stood beside me. Before us on the ground were the four tusks of the elephants we had killed, and their two tails.

There was great excitement among the people ; they had remarked this time also that after my departure the clock had stopped ; and were persuaded more than ever that the noise of its tick was made by spirits inside ; that these had left to follow me, but that now I had returned they also had come back to dwell therein again. The same had happened before, when I had gone with my hunters to shoot nginas. No one during my absence had dared to come near the clock. They were even afraid to go under the veranda of the house. All my goods I found where I had left them.

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In the midst of deep silence my hunters recounted all that had taken place since we had left the plantation. They omitted nothing, and the dear slaves thought they were the greatest men that had ever existed, for they had travelled with the Oguizi. It was very late when they all bade me good-night and left. After they were gone, and I had retired, I heard the voice of Regundo thanking the spirits of his forefathers that every one had come back safely; and he told them also how happy he was to see the Oguizi once more.

After a few days' hunting and shooting in the neighborhood of the plantation, seeing only birds and animals that I found before, I considered it time to leave the place, and one day I said to Regundo and to my faithful hunters that I must return to King Mombo.

I began to pack the birds and animals I had stuffed, also the butterflies and insects I had collected. The news spread fast among the people that I was getting ready to go away. Preparations were immediately made for my departure. A great quantity of food was prepared for King Mombo.

That evening, every man, woman, and child had gathered round my little house. Regundo, Oshoria, Ngola, Ogoola, and Quabi were seated as close to me as they could get. All were silent, and sadness was

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on their faces. They knew that the Oguizi was going away, and that they would never see him again. They loved me and I loved them in return. We love those who love us; and if one has friends, he is sure to be friendly himself. Above all, we love those who are kind to us.

I broke the painful silence, and said aloud: "Re-gundo and Oshoria, Ngola, Quabi, Ogoola, and you men, women, and children that are round me to-night, you have all been kind to me. I love you all."

At these words they all shouted with one voice: "Oguizi, we love you! We love you!"

Then came again another pause, and I said: "We have all had a good time together. You have taken great care of me. I have been very happy when with you. The best you had you have given to me. No man has trapped or killed game that he has not brought to me first. I would have a bad heart if I did not love you, but the Oguizi must soon leave you, for he must go and see other countries. I will tell Mombo how good you have been to me, and that you are all my friends, and I will make him promise me, and take as his witnesses the spirits of his ancestors, that he will let you die on his plantations, and never sell you, or give you away as payment for wives, for indemnity, or in exchange for canoes or

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anything else." They listened to my words in breathless silence, and then with one voice cried, "Thank you, Oguizi. You are a good Oguizi."

After they had become quiet again, I continued: "To-morrow I shall leave you and go back to King Mombo," at which my hunters, Regundo, and others shouted; "We are going with you."

"After I have left you," I continued, "I want you to remember the Oguizi, for I shall never forget you, and when I go back to the country of the Oguizis I will tell them what friends we were, how we hunted together, and how we spent many evenings round the bright fires."

When I spoke these words one could have heard a leaf fall on the ground. Then an old slave got up and said: "Oguizi, stay with us a little longer." And my hunters, looking tenderly at me added: "We will go again with you into the great forest and hunt elephants and nginas, and other wild beasts." But I replied: "I have to go far, far away towards the country where the sun rises, before I return to the land of the Oguizis, who are waiting for me to hear the news about what I have seen in the great forest."

Then another slave arose and said: "Oguizi, give to each of us some of your hair; we will keep it to remember you by, and show it to strangers to prove

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that you have been amongst us. Otherwise they will not believe us ; but when they see the hair they will know that they have never seen the like."

These words were greeted with a great shout of approbation. I began to pull my hair out one hair at a time ; I gave to each man one hair. My hair had grown very long and hung on my shoulders. I could not have given a greater present to these people. No brass kettle even had the same value in their eyes. To Regundo, Oshoria, Ogoola, Ngola, and Quabi, who had been my constant companions, I gave three hairs each.

After this, I distributed among the women all the beads I had. To Regundo's wife and to each of the wives of my hunters I gave a small looking-glass. Then they all went to their quarters, saying : " Good night, good Oguizi."

Early the next morning every one was on the river bank to bid good-by to me, the women bringing presents of mats and food. Regundo, Oshoria, Ngola, Quabi, and Ogoola were in my canoe, with the elephant tusks and tails. After I was in the canoe I stood up and held " Omemba " in my right hand, so that all the people could see the stick of King Mombo.

I gave the order for departure and immediately my hunters fired their guns, while ashore other men fired



"I stood up and beld 'Omemba' in my right hand"



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also, and others beat the tomtoms. The noise was deafening as gun after gun was fired.

The last words I heard after the guns ceased firing and the tomtoms were still, were: "Good-by, Oguizi, come back to us." Three canoes loaded with bunches of plantains, manioc, and all kinds of food for King Mombo followed us. The little American flag which I always carried with me floated proudly on the breeze at the stern of my canoe, and displayed its stars and stripes. Wherever I went I took the precious flag with me.

My hunters were in a high glee, for they knew that the heart of King Mombo their master would be glad when he saw the big elephant-tusks, and Oshoria said: "I think King Mombo will be able to buy six slaves with the goods he will get for the four tusks, and marry several women also."

Ngola suggested that possibly Mombo might barter the tusks for guns, so that he could arm his people and be more powerful in case of war.

Then came a pause and all shouted: "We are men, we are men; the great Oguizi is our friend." They fired their guns and the tomtoms beat louder than ever. The paddling was renewed with more vigor than before. At last King Mombo's village came in sight. The men sang louder than ever as we neared

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the place. The tomtoms beat. Regundo and Oshoria stood up and began to gesticulate in the wildest possible manner. My other hunters followed their example and all sang: "We come back with the Oguizi. Great, indeed, is King Mombo," and repeated the same thing over and over again.

The men paddled with such force that two-thirds of our canoe was out of the water when we landed, the men shouting again as they stepped ashore: "We are men, we are men."

I landed, holding "Omemba" in my right hand.

King Mombo was on the shore to receive me, beating his kendo and calling on the spirits of his ancestors to come and see the sight. Mombo wore a waistcoat and a coat, but had no shirt or trousers. We embraced each other amid the shouts of his people, who had also come to welcome me back. Many tomtoms were beating violently in the village, and guns were fired to celebrate my return. The people were wild with excitement.

King Mombo led me to the big building where the people were accustomed to meet, and bade me take a seat by his side. We were surrounded by a great crowd. Then Regundo, Oshoria, Ngola, Ogoola, and Quabi came forward with the four elephant-tusks and laid them on the ground at the feet of King

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Mombo, whose face beamed with pleasure at the sight. "The two big tusks," said Oshoria, "are from an elephant the Oguizi and I killed. The two others are from another elephant which Ngola, Ogoola, and Quabi killed. Here are the tails, they are not yet quite dried."

Other slaves followed and laid before the king two boars, an antelope, two gazelles, three monkeys, and a quantity of dried fish. The sight delighted the old king, who was fond of good living, and disliked "gou-amba."

"I can see that you love me, and that you do not forget me, my slaves," said he, pointing to the pile of food.

Then ensued a great stillness. King Mombo rose and shouted: "Look at me, my people! Look at Mombo, your chief! Look at the Oguizi! Never did an Oguizi visit our forefathers." To which the people shouted in return: "Great indeed is King Mombo."

Then Regundo recounted in a loud voice, so that everybody could hear, how I arrived at the plantation, how I showed him King Mombo's stick and all that had happened during the time I was with them. The King congratulated Oshoria, Ogoola, Ngola, and Quabi on their success in hunting elephants. Turn-

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ing to Regundo, he said: "You, my old and faithful slave, I love you and I trust you. I am glad you came with the Oguizi. In your days you were a great elephant hunter also. You and I have grown old together."

Oshoria next arose and told of our hunting, and how one day I disappeared in the forest and they did not see me for three days, during which they all believed I had changed my form. In the evening there was a great war dance, for which the men put on their war paint. Several times they formed a ring round me, dancing and bending low their bodies and singing: "You are a great Oguizi! You are a good Oguizi! You are the friend of King Mombo. King Mombo is a great king above all other kings."

Two days after my reception found me again under the big roof seated by the side of King Mombo with a great crowd of people round us.

I rose from my seat and said: "King Mombo, soon I am going to leave your country. I return to you 'Omemba.' It has been of great service to me. I thank you for it. King, you have been good and kind to me. I love you. You have given me food when I was hungry, water when I was thirsty, a house to rest and sleep in. All your people have been kind and good to me."

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Then I called Regundo, Oshoria, Ngola, Ogoola, and Quabi, and bade them stand by my side. I bade the other slaves that had come with me come near me.

A deep silence followed, and in a loud voice, so that all the people could hear, I said: "King Mombo, the Oguizi wants you to make him a solemn promise, and to call on the spirits of your forefathers whom you venerate and worship, to be witnesses of your promise. Promise me, King Mombo, that no matter what happens, you will never sell Regundo, Oshoria, Ogoola, Ngola, Quabi, or their wives, or any of the other slaves living on the plantations where I have been. Promise me that you will let them die where they have their home. These men and women were born free as you were and were sold into slavery, by their parents, relations, or by the people of their tribe for one reason or another."

Then I stopped. The tomtoms began to beat furiously, the drummers singing war-songs at the same time. Then came a great silence, in the midst of which King Mombo rose, and spoke in a loud voice as follows: "Oguizi, I promise that I will never sell Regundo, Oshoria, Ogoola, Ngola, or Quabi, or their wives,—that I will never sell the slaves that are your friends and are living to-day on the plantations where you have been."

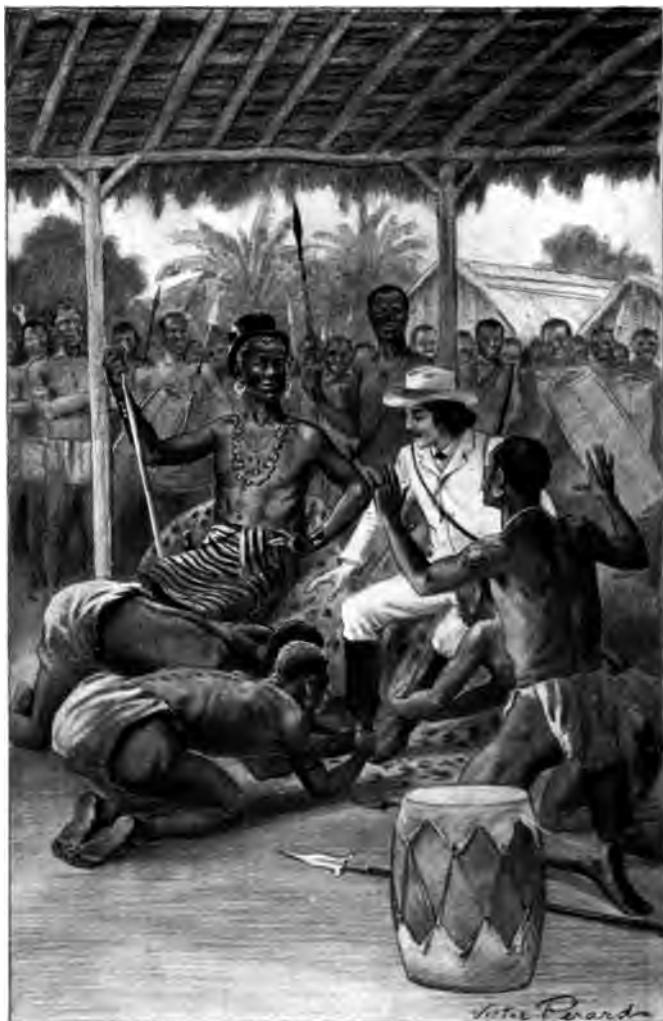
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After these words he paused, then he called upon the spirits of his ancestors to witness the promise he had just made to me. He called first on the spirit of Olenda, then on that of Ratenoo, then upon the spirit of Ronpano twice, of Sholomba three times, of Adooma four times. These had been great men and had accomplished valiant deeds in their day, which had been repeated to the people generation after generation. The spirits upon which he called several times had died long ago, and Adooma, upon whom he had called four times, was the father of the clan and had died long, long ago. In the great forest each tribe is divided into a number of clans, each clan having its chief.

After King Mombo had sat down a great shout arose, and Regundo, and my hunters, Oshoria, Ogoola, Ngola, and Quabi fell at my feet and clasped them, and looked me in the face without saying a word. But their eyes spoke and told me of their gratitude. Then they prostrated themselves before King Mombo, and said to him: "Master, we love you, and we are your faithful slaves," and took hold of his feet.

I thanked King Mombo for his promise, and when I embraced him a great shout rose among his people. Then the tomtoms beat violently and we all separated.

The following evening, when it was quite dark,



"My hunters . . . fell at my feet and clasped them"



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KING MOMBO

Regundo, Oshoria, Ogoola, Ngola, and Quabi came into my hut, as I had told them to do. All the people were asleep and no one had seen them come in. I gave them powder and presents for them and their wives. They implored me to tell to no one that I had given them presents, saying people might become jealous and bewitch them.

A few days afterwards, Regundo, my hunters, and all the people who had come with me returned to King Mombo's plantation. I accompanied them to their canoe and bade them a friendly farewell.

After they had gone I made preparations for my departure. King Mombo was to give me canoes and men to take me to Rotembo, a great chief living far up the Ogobai river. When I had bid farewell to King Mombo, he and his people followed me to the bank of the river. Before I embarked in my canoe, Mombo took hold of both my hands. His mouth was filled with the ochre upon which the skull of his ancestor rested, and he blew it over my hands, invoking at the same time his ancestors' spirits.

Soon after I was out of sight.





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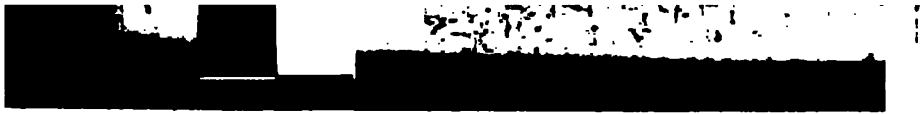
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